







PRESIDENT EDWARDS.

HISTORY
OF
REDEMPTION,

ON A PLAN ENTIRELY ORIGINAL :

EXHIBITING THE

GRADUAL DISCOVERY AND ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE

DIVINE PURPOSES

IN THE

Salvation of Man ;

INCLUDING A COMPREHENSIVE

VIEW OF CHURCH HISTORY,

AND THE FULFILMENT OF

SCRIPTURE PROPHECIES.

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WITH THE

LIFE AND EXPERIENCE

OF THE AUTHOR.

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LIFE AND EXPERIENCE

OF

PRESIDENT EDWARDS.



THIS learned and most excellent man was born at Windsor, in the province of Connecticut, Oct. 5. 1703; was entered at Yale College, in 1716, and made bachelor of arts in 1720, before he was seventeen years of age. His mental powers opened themselves so early and so vigorously, that he read Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding with uncommon delight at thirteen years of age; even at that period discovering a depth, solidity, and penetration of mind, which found nothing so pleasant to itself as the exercise of its own powers.

He lived at college nearly two years after taking his first degree, preparing himself, principally, for the sacred office. After passing the usual trials, he was licensed, according to the custom of the college and the form of religion in the province, to preach the gospel as a candidate.

In August 1722, he received a call to preach to the English Presbyterians at New York, where he continued with approbation above eight months. This society was then too small to maintain a minister; and therefore, in the spring of the year 1723, he returned to his father's house in Connecticut, where, during the following summer, he followed his studies with the closest application. It appears, however, that he had a deep sense of the christian and ministerial profession upon his mind during his abode at New York, that the people he watched over became very dear to him, and that he left them at last with deep regret.

In the spring of the year 1724, having taken his master's degree in the year before, he was chosen tutor of Yale College, and he fulfilled this office above two years. It was indeed an engagement of great consequence for a young man of twenty one, who, by his early introduction into the ministry, and other avocations, could not have found too many opportunities for his own improvement: but the strength of his mind overcame what are usually insuperable difficulties in the way of the generality; and perhaps his genius acted more forcibly from its not being confined with academical fetters, which elevated geniuses can seldom endure.

In Sep. 1726, he resigned his tutorship, in consequence of the invitation of the people at Northampton, in Connecticut, for assistance to his mother's father, Mr. Stoddard, who was the settled minister of the town. He was ordained colleague, Feb. 15. 1727, in the twenty fourth year of his age, and continued in the ministerial service there till June 22. 1750, when he was dismissed for attempting to reform the church.

What seems at first to have rendered Mr. Edwards an object of hatred, was a circumstance which should have made him, and certainly would, among persons truly religious, an object of love. Some young people of his congregation had procured some obscene publications, which they commented upon among themselves for their own proficiency in lasciviousness, and propagated, with the usual decency of such persons, for the infection of others. In a short time this came to Mr. Edwards's ears; and therefore taking occasion after a sermon upon Heb. xii. 15, 16, to call the leading members of his charge together, he informed them of what he had heard, and procured a consent that the matter should be examined. A committee was appointed for this purpose, and to assist the pastor. When this was done, Mr. Edwards appointed a time of meeting; and then read a list of the names of young persons, accusing and accused, without specifying under which predicament they stood, who were desired to come together at his house.

Upon the declaration of names, it appeared that almost all the families in the town had some relation or other concerned in the matter; and therefore a great number of the heads of families not only altered their minds about examination, but declared that their children should not be called to account for such things as these. The town was immediately in a blaze: and this so strengthened the hands, or hardened the faces of the guilty, that they set their pastor at defiance with the greatest insolence and contempt. Thus Mr. Edwards's hands were weakened, and he afterwards had but little success in his ministry. Carnality much increased among his people, and the youth in particular became more wanton and dissolute.

All this paved the way for something more. It had been a standing opinion among this people for some time, countenanced also by their late pastor, 'That unconverted persons,' known to be such by the ungodliness of their lives, or their ignorance of divine truth, 'had notwithstanding a right in the sight of God to the sacrament of the Lord's supper; and that therefore it was their duty to partake of it, even though they had no appearance of the grace and holiness, which the gospel states to be inseparable from true

believers. It was sufficient if they were outward and visible members ; so that they who really rejected Jesus Christ, and disliked the gospel way of salvation in their hearts, and knew that this was true of themselves, might (inconceivable as it appears) make the profession without lying and hypocrisy.'

To the common inconveniences always attending a national church, where it is impossible to examine every man's profession, or to keep him from disgracing it, here is an addition becoming the disciples of Ignatius of Loyola, by which men may be hypocrites without the guilt of hypocrisy, and liars without the imputation of sin. A convenient sort of principle indeed to men of a certain cast ; but by no means to those who are never to forget, that 'fornication and all uncleanness, filthiness, or foolish talking, should not even be named amongst them, as becometh saints.' Ephes. v. 3—7.

Mr. Edwards had long been uneasy upon the prevalence of this principle, (one of the most strange that ever any church of Christ avowed) and upon his own yielding to the example of his predecessor and to a practice settled before he came thither. His doubts and uneasiness, as might be expected from so good a man, increased upon him, and drove him at length to a thorough investigation of the subject. The result was, a clear conviction of the error, and a firm determination to expose it. He was convinced, that 'To be a visible christian was to put on the appearance of a real one ; that the profession of christianity was a profession of that in which real christianity consists ;' and that therefore, as the Lord's supper was intended for real christians, none ought to come to it who were not at least professors of real christianity, and to whom no imputation of allowed ungodliness could justly be made.

The declaration of his mind upon this head, among such a kind of men, raised an immediate clamour, and put the town into as great a ferment as the preaching of a holy apostle had long before occasioned at Ephesus. They were all in an uproar ; and 'Dismiss him, dismiss him,' was the universal cry of men, women, and elders. He had touched a favourite sin, and a favourite principle which protected it: and (what was a very great truth, though not in their sense of it) he was no longer fit to be their pastor. He attempted to reason with them calmly ; but it was opposing his breath to the winds, the general cry was to have him dismissed.

Mr. Edwards, when they would not hear him, wished to refer the matter to some neighbouring ministers ; but this being rejected, he attempted to discuss the matter in a

course of lectures, which he began for the purpose; but although numbers came from the adjoining parts, very few of his own congregation would attend. So intoxicating is the nature of human prejudice, when once indulged, that men will rather renounce their reason than resume their temper.

He used all means in his power to reduce them at least to a calm, if not a charitable, temper; to hear and weigh, with a little attention, what he had to say for himself; and not to condemn him, were it only for their own sakes, without some shadow of a reason. But his meekness and modesty were treated as concessions against himself, and only raised the insolence and fury of his adversaries, instead of softening them into peace. Nothing would serve their turn (how plainly soever against their spiritual and real interest) but an absolute separation.

Mr. Edwards, finding all methods ineffectual to restrain the torrent of virulence, slander, and falsehood rolling upon him, at length yielded to the artifice of these men in packing a council, composed chiefly of their own friends. These, after some unavailing attempts for a reconciliation, passed a resolution, by the majority of one voice only, to this effect: That it was expedient that the pastoral relation between Mr. Edwards and his church should be dissolved, if they persisted in requiring it. This being reported to the people, they immediately voted his dismissal by a majority of two hundred against twenty, and he was accordingly dismissed, June 22, 1750.

Thus had these people the infamy of endeavouring to ruin the most able and celebrated divine that America ever produced. But they knew not their own mercies: such a man as President Edwards would impart honour to any country or profession, and be readily embraced by the wise and good in all. The few abhorers of this atrocious act entered an unavailing protest against it. The good man, shocked rather for his enemies than for himself, preached a most solemn and affecting farewell discourse, which was afterwards published, on 2 Cor. i. 14. His doctrine from this text was, 'That ministers, and the people who have been under their care, must meet one another at the tribunal of Christ.' The malice of his enemies did not stop here; for when at times there was no preacher to supply the pulpit, he cheerfully gave them his service, rather than that it should be empty. This kindness, which would have conciliated more ingenuous minds, only increased the unhappy flame kindled in theirs, insomuch that they called the town together, and voted that he should preach among them no more. And so they frequently went without preaching, ra-

ther than have the free ministrations of a man, 'of whom the world itself was not worthy.'

Thus ended his service of nearly four-and-twenty years to an undiscerning and ungrateful people, who had been much upon his heart, and for whom he had always expressed a very tender concern. For their good he was always writing, contriving, and labouring; for them he had poured out ten thousand fervent prayers; and in their welfare he had rejoiced as one that findeth great spoil. Yet all their detestable conduct did not alter the frame of his mind. He was calm, sedate and humble, under the most injurious treatment: his resolution and conduct in the whole affair were truly wonderful, and cannot be set in so beautiful and affecting a light by any description, as they appeared in to his friends who were eye-witnesses.

This incomparable man was now in the decline of life, with little or no income besides his stipend; and this throws the greatest light upon his faithfulness and sincerity. Nor had he any view of support from another appointment; for he knew not how far the malice of his people might extend to prevent it, or the prejudice of his dismission operate against him elsewhere. Neither was he capable (alas, what pity he should be driven to think of it!) to take up any other business for a support. Poverty and disgrace were before him, but he knew that he had a good Master. He had divine comfort in his soul; and in a short time providence provided both for him and his family.

Ashamed of this unparalleled baseness to so excellent a man, his friends, or rather the friends of godliness administered to his relief; and he was soon after appointed to the mission at Stockbridge; but not before some other insolent and bitter attempts had been made to ruin his reputation, as well as to deprive him of the means of subsistence.

It may not be improper here to add, that one of the ring-leaders in this iniquitous business was so stung with his conduct towards Mr. Edwards, that he afterwards made a public confession of his guilt, in a letter to the Rev. Mr. Hall, of Sutton, which letter, after having enumerated the particulars of his opposition to that good man, concludes thus. 'In these instances, Sir, of my conduct, and others (to which you were not privy) in the course of that most melancholy contention with Mr. Edwards, wherein I now see that I was very much influenced by pride, self-sufficiency, ambition, and vanity, I appear to myself vile; and doubtless much more so to others who are more impartial. In the review thereof I abhor myself, and repent sorely: and if my own heart condemns me, it behoves me solemnly to remember, that God is greater, and knoweth all things; and I

hereby own, Sir, that such treatment of Mr. Edwards, as is herein before mentioned, wherein I was so deeply concerned and active, was particularly sinful and ungrateful in me, because I was not only under the common obligations of each individual of the society to him, as a most able, diligent, and faithful pastor; but I had also received many instances of his tenderness, goodness, and generosity to me, as a young kinsman, whom he was disposed to treat in a most friendly manner. Indeed, Sir, I must own, that by my conduct in consulting and acting against Mr. Edwards, within the time of our most unhappy disputes with him, and especially in and about that abominable remonstrance, I have so far symbolized with Balaam, Ahithophel, and Judas, that I am confounded and filled with terror oftentimes when I think of this distressing similitude. And I freely confess, that on account of my conduct above mentioned, I have the greatest reason to tremble at those solemn and awful words of our Saviour, Matt. xviii. 6, and those in Luke x. 16. I am deeply sensible that nothing but that infinite grace and mercy, which saved some of the betrayers and murderers of our blessed Lord and the persecutors of his martyrs, can pardon me; in which alone I hope for pardon, for the sake of Christ, whose blood (blessed be God) cleanseth from all sin. And I most heartily wish and pray, that the town and church of Northampton would seriously and carefully examine whether they have not abundant cause to judge, that they are now lying under great guilt in the sight of God: and whether those of us, who were concerned in that most awful contention with Mr. Edwards, can ever more reasonably expect God's favour and blessing, until our eyes are opened, and we become thoroughly convinced that we have greatly provoked the most High, and been injurious to one of the best of men; and until we shall be thoroughly convinced that we have dreadfully persecuted Christ by persecuting and vexing that just man and servant of Christ; until we shall be humble as in the dust therefore, and till we openly in full terms, and without baulking the matter, confess the same before the world, and most humbly and earnestly seek forgiveness of God, and do what we can to honour the memory of Mr. Edwards, and clear it of all the aspersions which are unjustly cast upon him; since God has been pleased to put it beyond our power to ask his forgiveness. Such terms I am persuaded the great and righteous God will hold us to, and that it will be in vain for us to hope to escape with impunity in any other way. This I am convinced of with regard to myself, and this way I most solemnly propose to adopt, if God in his mercy shall give me opportunity, that so

oy making free confession to God and man of my sin and guilt, and publicly taking shame to myself, I may give glory to the God of Israel, and do what in me lies to clear the memory of that venerable man from the wrongs and injuries I was so active in bringing on his reputation and character; and I thank God that he has been pleased to spare my life and opportunity therefore to this time, and am sorry that I have delayed the affair so long.'

Mr. Edwards, who was able to shine in the seats of learning and afterwards called to preside over one, was now delegated to the instruction of savage Indians at Stockbridge. This place is in the western part of Massachusetts's Bay, and about six miles from Mr. Edwards's former residence at Northampton. He was fixed here on Aug. 8. 1751; and continued his labours, in more peace and quietness than he had ever known before, for six years. In this interval, though much in years, he made greater attainments in knowledge, and wrote more for the church of God, than he had ever been able to do, within the same space of time, during the former part of his life. In this retirement he composed his deepest and most valuable works; so that when, in his own judgment, as well as that of others, his usefulness seemed to be cut off, he found greater opportunities of service than ever. A pleasing calm, after so grievous a storm, to his troubled mind.

On the death of Mr. Aaron Burr, president of New Jersey College, which was on the 24th of September, 1757, the trustees of that seminary unsolicited chose Mr. Edwards to succeed him: but our excellent author was with difficulty prevailed upon to accept it, modestly alleging his own insufficiency, ill health, and disuse to that kind of life. At length, upon the arguments and persuasions of his brethren in the ministry, he accepted of this presidency, and went from Stockbridge to Prince Town in January, 1758. But the end of his labours was approaching; he had only preached two or three sermons, and had not entered fully upon the duties of his new office, when he was called to glory. The small pox, which has always been unusually fatal in America, had infected Prince Town, which induced the physician of the place to advise him to be inoculated, with the consent of the corporation. Accordingly he was inoculated on the 13th of February, and his disorder at first seemed to be favourable; but a fever coming on, and the pustules lying much in his throat, no proper medicines could be administered, and therefore the violence of it raged, till it put an end to his useful life, on March 22. 1758, in the fifty fifth year of his age.

When sensible that death was approaching, he called his

daughter, who was the only part of his family which had yet removed with him, and addressed her in the following words: 'Dear Lucy, it seems to me to be the will of God, that I must shortly leave you: therefore, give my kindest love to my dear wife, and tell her that the uncommon union which has so long subsisted between us, has been of such a nature as I trust is spiritual, and therefore will continue for ever. I hope she will be supported under so great a trial, and submit cheerfully to the will of God. And as to my children, you are now likely to be left fatherless, which I hope will be an inducement to you all to seek a father, who will never fail you.' He desired that his funeral might not be attended with parade, as is usual in America, but rather that something be given to the poor. He could say but little in his sickness, owing to the nature and seat of his disorder; but just at the last, when surrounded by friends lamenting their own loss and that of the church and college, he said, to their great surprize, as they did not imagine he heard them or was able to speak, 'Trust in God, and ye need not fear:' and then, almost literally, fell asleep in Jesus.

We are persuaded that our readers will be abundantly gratified with the account of our author's experience as written by himself; and therefore shall make no apology for subjoining almost the whole of it.

In this narrative we find our great and celebrated metaphysician relating the manner of God's dealings with his soul, in a style that breathes all the humility and simplicity of a little child. 'It is peculiarly sweet to observe,' says an evangelical writer, 'that in matters of spiritual concern, the philosopher and the ploughman, if truly regenerated, have the same feelings, and speak the same language: they all eat of the same spiritual meat, and drink of the same spiritual rock, which follows them, and that rock is Christ.' Hence that similitude of experience, or, to speak figuratively, that strong and striking family likeness, which obtains among the converted people of God in every period of time, and in every nation under heaven. They all without exception feel themselves totally ruined by original sin; they all without exception take refuge in the righteousness and cross of Christ; and unite in ascribing the whole praise of their salvation to the alone free grace and sovereign mercy of Father, Son, and Spirit.

'I had,' says Mr. Edwards, 'a variety of concerns and exercises about my soul from my childhood; but had two more remarkable seasons of awakening, before I met with that change by which I was brought to those new dispositions, and that new sense of things, that I have since had.

The first time was when I was a boy some years before I went to college, at a time of remarkable awakening in my father's congregation. I was then very much affected for many months, and concerned about the things of religion, and my soul's salvation; and was abundant in duties. I used to pray five times a day in secret, and to spend much time in religious talk with other boys; and used to meet with them to pray together. I experienced I know not what kind of delight in religion; my mind was much engaged in it, and had much self-righteous pleasure; and it was my delight to abound in religious duties. I, with some of my schoolmates, joined together and built a booth in a swamp, in a very secret and retired spot, for a place of prayer. Besides this, I had particular secret places of my own in the woods, where I used to retire by myself, and used to be, from time to time, much affected. My affections were lively and easily moved, and I seemed to be in my element, when I engaged in religious duties: and I am ready to think, many are deceived with such affections, and such a kind of delight, as I then had in religion, and mistake it for grace.

'But in process of time, my convictions and affections wore off, and I entirely lost all those affections and delights, and left off secret prayer, at least as to any constant performance of it, and I returned like a dog to his vomit, and went on in the ways of sin. Sometimes I was very uneasy, especially towards the latter part of the time of my being at college. Till it pleased God, in my last year at college, at a time when I was in the midst of many uneasy thoughts about the state of my soul, to seize me with a pleurisy; in which he brought me nigh to the grave, and shook me over the pit of hell.

'Yet it was not long after my recovery, before I fell again into my old ways of sin. God however would not suffer me to go on with any quietness, for I had great and violent inward struggles; till after many conflicts with wicked inclinations, and repeated resolutions and bonds that I laid myself under by a kind of vows to God, I was brought wholly to break off all former wicked ways, and all ways of known outward sin, and to apply myself to seek salvation, and practise the duties of religion; but without that kind of affection and delight that I had formerly experienced. My concern now wrought more by inward struggles and conflicts, and self-reflections. I made seeking my salvation the main business of my life; but yet it seems to me, I sought after a miserable manner; which has made me sometimes since to question, whether it ever issued in that which was saving; being ready to doubt, whether such miserable

seeking was ever succeeded. But yet I was brought to seek salvation in a manner that I never was before, and felt a spirit to part with all things in the world for an interest in Christ. My concern continued and prevailed, with many exercising thoughts and inward struggles; yet it never seemed proper to express the concern I had, by the name of terror.

‘From my childhood up, my mind had been wont to be full of objections against the doctrine of God’s sovereignty, in choosing whom he would to eternal life, and rejecting whom he pleased, leaving them eternally to perish. It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me; but I remember the time very well, when I seemed to be convinced and fully satisfied, as to this sovereignty of God, and his justice in thus eternally disposing of men according to his sovereign pleasure. Yet I never could give an account how, or by what means I was thus convinced; not in the least imagining at the time, nor a long time after, that there was any extraordinary influence of God’s Spirit in it: but only that now I saw farther, and my reason apprehended the justice and reasonableness of it. However, my mind rested in it; and it put an end to all those cavils and objections that had till then abode with me all the preceding part of my life. But I have oftentimes, since that first conviction, had quite another kind of sense of God’s sovereignty than I had then. I have oftensince, not only had a conviction, but a *delightful* conviction. The doctrine of God’s sovereignty has very often appeared an exceeding pleasant, bright, and sweet doctrine to me; and absolute sovereignty is what I love to ascribe to God. But my first conviction was not with this.’

This part of our excellent Author’s experience reminds us of the seventeenth Article of the Church of England, which asserts, that ‘The godly consideration of predestination, and of our election in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons.’ Such indeed have many found it; but let it be remembered, it is only ‘the godly consideration’ of predestination that is thus comfortable; that this must be connected with the evidence of our election in Christ, and that to godly persons only is this contemplation sweet and profitable; to others it may be dangerous, and it must be painful. An amiable divine has observed, ‘That none should go to the university of Predestination, until they have been at the grammar school of Faith and Repentance.’

‘The first that I remember ever to have found any thing of that sort of inward sweet delight in God and divine things which I have since enjoyed was on reading those words in

1. Tim. i. 17. 'Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever, Amen.' As I read the words, there came into my soul, and was as it were diffused through it, a sense of the glory of the Divine Being; quite different from any thing I ever experienced before. Never any words of scripture seemed to me as these words did. I thought with myself, how excellent a Being that was, and how happy I should be, if I might enjoy that God, and be wrapt up to God in heaven, and be as it were swallowed up in him. I kept saying, and as it were singing over these words of scripture to myself, and prayer to God that I might enjoy him. I also prayed in a manner quite different from what I used to do, with a new sort of affection; but it never came into my thoughts that there was any thing spiritual or of a saving nature in this.

'From about that time, I began to have a new kind of apprehensions and ideas of Christ, and the work of redemption, and the glorious way of salvation by him. I had an inward sweet sense of these things, that at times came into my heart, and my soul was led away in pleasant views and contemplations of them. I greatly delighted to spend time in reading and meditating on Christ, and the beauty and excellency of his person, and the lovely way of salvation by free grace in him. I found no books so delightful to me, as those that treated of these subjects. Those words in Cant. ii. 1, used to be abundantly with me: I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the vallies.' The words seemed to me sweetly to represent the loveliness and beauty of Jesus Christ. The whole book of Canticles used to be pleasant to me, and I used to be much in reading it about that time; and found, from time to time, an inward sweetness that used as it were to carry me away in my contemplations. The sense I had of divine things would often of a sudden, kindle up a sweet burning in my heart, an ardour that I know not how to express.

'After this my sense of divine things gradually increased, and became more and more lively, and had more of that inward sweetness. The appearance of every thing was altered; there seemed to be as it were a calm, sweet cast or appearance of divine glory, in almost every thing. God's excellency, wisdom, purity and love, appeared in every thing; in the sun, moon, and stars; in the clouds, and blue sky; in the grass, flowers, trees; in the water, and all nature, which used greatly to fix my mind. I often used to sit and view the moon for a long time; and so in the day-time spent much time in viewing the clouds and sky, to behold the sweet glory of God in these things; in the mean

time singing forth, in a low voice, my contemplations of the Creator and Redeemer. Scarcely any thing, among all the works of nature, was so sweet to me as thunder and lightning; formerly, nothing had been so terrible. I used to be uncommonly terrified with thunder, and it used to strike me with terror when I saw a thunder-storm rising: but now, on the contrary, it rejoiced me. I felt God at the first appearance of a thunder-storm, and used to take the opportunity at such times, to fix myself to view the clouds, and see the lightnings play, and hear the majestic and awful voice of God's thunder, which oftentimes was exceedingly entertaining, leading me to sweet contemplations of my great and glorious God. While I viewed these objects, I used to spend my time, as it always seemed natural to me, in singing or chanting forth my meditations; speaking my thoughts in soliloquies, and with a singing voice.

'I felt then a great satisfaction as to my state; but that did not content me. I had vehement longings of soul after God and Christ, and after more holiness, wherewith my heart seemed to be full, and ready to break, which often brought to my mind the words of the Psalmist, Psal. cxix. 20 \times , 'My soul breaketh for the longing it hath.' I often felt a mourning and lamenting in my heart, that I had not turned to God sooner, that I might have had more time to grow in grace. My mind was greatly fixed on divine things. I was almost perpetually engaged in contemplation, and spent most of my time in thinking of divine things, year after year. I also spent abundance of my time in walking alone in the woods and solitary places for meditation, soliloquy, and prayer, and converse with God; and it was always my manner, at such times, to sing forth my contemplations; and was almost constantly in ejaculatory prayer wherever I was. Prayer seemed natural to me, as the breath by which the inward burnings of my heart had vent.

'The delights which I now felt in things of religion were of an exceeding different kind from those forementioned, that I had when I was a boy. They were totally of another kind, and what I then had no more notion or idea of, than one born blind has of pleasant and beautiful colours. They were of a more inward, pure, soul-animating and refreshing nature. Those former delights never reached the heart; they did not arise from any sight of the divine excellency of the things of God, or any taste of the soul-satisfying and life-giving good there is in them.'

This great man must certainly be the best judge of his own feelings; but we have sometimes queried whether our Author, and some other excellent men, have not erred in imputing their first conviction and early experience in reli-

gion to some other cause, which ought rather to be attributed to the agency of the Divine Spirit. It certainly does not follow, that because our first views of divine things are less clear, and our first religious affections less spiritual, than afterwards, that they do not proceed from the same cause. The early beamings of the dawn, and the noontide sun beams, though they differ immensely in their degree of light and heat, are certainly of the same nature, and proceed from the same cause. When our Lord first anointed the eyes of the blind man, he saw 'Men as trees walking;' but when he put his hands on him again, 'he saw every man 'clearly.' Mark viii. 24. Yet by the same hands were both effects produced, and to the same Redeemer was the glory of both due.

'My sense of divine things seemed gradually to encrease, till I went to preach at New York, which was about a year and a half after they began. While I was there, I felt them very sensibly, in a much higher degree than I had done before. My longings after God and holiness were much increased; pure and humble, holy and heavenly christianity, appeared exceedingly amiable. I felt a burning desire to be in every thing a complete christian; to be conformed to the blessed image of Christ: and that I might live in all things according to the pure, sweet, and blessed rules of the gospel. I had an eager thirsting after progress in these things, my longings put me upon pursuing and pressing after them. It was my continual strife day and night, and constant enquiry, how I should be more holy, and live more holily, and more becoming a child of God, and a disciple of Christ. I sought an encrease of grace and holiness, and that I might live a holy life, with vastly more earnestness than ever I sought grace, before I had it. I used to be continually examining myself, and studying and contriving for likely ways and means how I should live holily, with far greater diligence and earnestness than ever I pursued any thing in my life; but with too great a dependence on my own strength, which afterwards proved a great injury to me. My experience had not then taught me, as it has done since, my extreme feebleness and impotence, every manner of way; and the innumerable and bottomless depths of secret corruption and deceit that there were in my heart. However, I went on with my eager pursuit after more holiness, and sweet conformity to Christ.

'The heaven I desired was a heaven of holiness; to be with God, and to spend an eternity in divine love, and holy communion with Christ. My mind was very much taken up with contemplations on heaven, and the enjoyments of its blessed inhabitants; and living there in perfect holiness

humility, and love. At that time it appeared to be a great part of the happiness of heaven, that there the saints could express their love to Christ. It was a great clog and hindrance to me, that what I felt within, I could not express to God, and give vent to, as I desired. The inward ardour of my soul seemed to be hindered and pent up, and could not freely flame out as it would. I used often to think how in heaven this sweet principle should freely and fully vent and express itself. Heaven appeared to me exceedingly delightful as a world of love, and all happiness seemed to consist in living in pure, humble, heavenly, divine love.

‘I remember the thoughts I used then to have of holiness. I said sometimes to myself, I do certainly know that I love holiness, such as the gospel prescribes, and there was nothing in it but what was ravishingly lovely.’ It appeared to me to be the highest beauty and amiableness, above all other beauties; that it was a *divine* beauty, far purer than any thing here upon earth, and that every thing else was like mire, filth and defilement, in comparison of it.

‘Holiness, as I then wrote down some of my contemplations on it, appeared to me to be of a sweet, pleasant, charming, serene, calm nature; it brought an inexpressible purity, brightness, peacefulness, and rapture to the soul; it made the soul like a field or garden of God, with all manner of pleasant flowers, enjoying a sweet calm, and the gentle vivifying beams of the sun. The soul of a true christian, as I then wrote in my meditations, appeared like such a little white flower as we see in the spring of the year, low and humble on the ground, opening its bosom to receive the pleasant beams of the sun’s glory; rejoicing as it were in a calm rapture, diffusing around a sweet fragrant, standing peacefully and lovingly in the midst of other flowers round about; all in like manner opening their bosoms to drink in the light of the sun.

‘There was no part of creature-holiness that I then, and at other times, had so great a sense of the loveliness of, as humility, brokenness of heart, and poverty of spirit, and there was nothing that I so much longed for. My heart panted after this, to lie low before God, and in the dust, that I might be nothing, and that God might be all; that I might become as a little child. While at New York, I was sometimes much affected with reflections on my past life, considering how late it was before I began to be truly religious, and how wickedly I had lived till then; and once so as to weep abundantly, and for a considerable time together.

‘On Jan. 12, 1722-3, I made a solemn dedication of myself to God, and wrote it down; giving up myself and all

that I had to God, to be for the future in no respect my own; to act as one that had no right to himself in any respect, and solemnly vowed to take God for my whole portion and felicity, looking on nothing else as any part of my happiness, nor acting as if it were. I took his law for the constant rule of my obedience, engaging to fight with all my might against the world, the flesh, and the devil, to the end of my life. But I have reason to be infinitely humbled, when I consider how much I have failed of answering my obligation.

I had then abundance of sweet religious conversation in the family where I lived, with Mr. John Smith, and his pious mother. My heart was knit in affection to those, in whom were appearances of true piety; and I could bear the thoughts of no other companions, but such as were holy, and the disciples of the blessed Jesus. I had great longings for the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world; my secret prayer used to be in great part taken up in praying for it. If I heard the least hint of any thing that happened in any part of the world, that appeared to me in some respect or other to have a favourable aspect on the interest of Christ's kingdom, my soul eagerly caught at it, and it would much animate and refresh me. I read with eagerness the public news, to see if I could not find something favourable to the interest of religion in the world.

I very frequently retired into a solitary place on the banks of Hudson's River, at some distance from the city, for contemplation on divine things, and secret converse with God; and had many sweet hours there. Sometimes Mr. Smith and I walked there together, to converse of the things of God; and our conversation used much to turn on the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world, and the glorious things that God would accomplish for his church in the latter days. I found the greatest delight in the holy scriptures of any book whatsoever; oftentimes in reading it, every word seemed to touch my heart. I felt a harmony between something in my heart, and those sweet and powerful words. I seemed often to see so much light exhibited by every sentence, and such a refreshing ravishing food communicated, that I could not get along in reading. I often dwelt long on one sentence, to see the wonders contained in it; and yet almost every sentence seemed to be full of wonders.

I left New York in the month of April 1723, and had a most bitter parting with Madam Smith and her son. My heart seemed to sink within me, at leaving the family and city, where I had enjoyed so many sweet and pleasant days. I went from New York to Weathersfield by water. As I

sailed away, I kept sight of the city as long as I could; and when out of sight of it, it would affect me much to look that way, with a kind of melancholy mixed with sweetness. However that night, after this sorrowful parting, I was greatly comforted in God at Westchester, where we went ashore to lodge, and had a pleasant time of it all the voyage to Saybrook. It was sweet to me to think of meeting dear christians in heaven, where we should never part more. At Saybrook went ashore to lodge on Saturday, and there kept the Sabbath; where I had a sweet and refreshing season, walking alone in the fields.

After I came home to Windsor, remained much in a like frame of mind as I had been in at New York, but only sometimes felt my heart ready to sink, with the thoughts of my friends at New York; and my refuge and support was in contemplations on the heavenly state, as I find in my Diary, of May 1, 1723. It was my comfort to think of that state, where there is fulness of joy; where reigns heavenly, sweet, calm, and delightful love, without alloy; where there are continually the dearest expressions of this love; where is the enjoyment of the persons loved, without ever parting; where these persons that appear so lovely in this world, will really be inexpressibly more lovely, and full of love to us. And how sweetly will the mutual lovers join together to sing the praises of God and the Lamb. How full will it fill us with joy to think that this enjoyment, these sweet exercises, will never cease or come to an end, but will last to all eternity!

Continued much in the same frame as I had been in at New York, till I went to New Haven, to live there as tutor of the college. I had a season of uncommon sweetness at Bolton, in a journey from Boston, walking out alone in the fields. After I went to New Haven I sunk in religion, my mind being diverted from my eager and violent pursuits after holiness, by some affairs that greatly perplexed and distracted my mind.

In September 1725, was taken ill at New Haven; and endeavouring to go home to Windsor, was so ill at the North Village, that I could go no further; where I lay sick for about a quarter of a year. In this sickness, God was pleased to visit me again with the sweet influences of his Spirit. My mind was greatly engaged on divine and pleasant contemplations, and I observed that those who watched with me would often be looking out for the morning, and seemed to wish for it; which brought to my mind those words of the Psalmist, which my soul with sweetness made its own language. 'My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning; I say, more than they

‘that watch for the morning.’ And when the light of the morning came, and the beams of the sun came in at the windows, it refreshed my soul from one morning to another: it seemed to me to be some image of the sweet light of God’s glory. About that time I used greatly to long for the conversion of some that I was concerned with. It seemed to me I could gladly honour them, and with delight be a servant to them, and lie at their feet, if they were but truly holy. But some time after this, I was again greatly diverted in my mind with some temporal concerns, that exceedingly took up my thoughts, greatly to the wounding of my soul. I went on through various exercises which it would be tedious to relate; that gave me much more experience of my own heart than ever I had before.

‘Since I came to Northampton, I have often had sweet complacency in God, in views of his glorious perfections, and the excellency of Jesus Christ. God has appeared to me, a glorious and lovely being, chiefly on account of his holiness. The holiness of God has always appeared to me the most lovely of all his attributes. The doctrines of God’s absolute sovereignty and free grace, in showing mercy to whom he would show mercy, and man’s absolute dependence on the operations of God’s holy Spirit, have very often appeared to me as sweet and glorious doctrines. These truths have been much my delight. God’s sovereignty has ever appeared to me as a great part of his glory; it has often been sweet to me to go to God, and adore him as a sovereign God, and ask sovereign mercy of him.

‘I have loved the doctrines of the gospel; they have been to my soul like green pastures. The gospel has seemed to me to be the richest treasure, the treasure that I have most desired, and longed that it might dwell richly in me. The way of salvation by Christ has appeared in a general way, glorious and excellent, most pleasant and beautiful. It has often seemed to me that it would, in a great measure, spoil heaven, to receive it in any other. That text has often been affecting and delightful to me: ‘A man shall be a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest,’ Isai. xxxii. 2.

‘It has often appeared sweet to me to be united to Christ; to have him for my head, and to be a member of his body; and also to have Christ for my teacher and prophet. I very often think, with sweetness and longings, and pantings of soul, of being a little child, taking hold of Christ, to be led by him through the wilderness of this world. Those words have often been sweet to me: ‘Except ye be converted, and become as little children,’ &c. I love to think of coming to Christ to receive salvation of him, poor in spirit, and

quite empty of self; humbly exalting him alone; cut entirely off from my own root, and to grow into and out of Christ; to have God in Christ to be all in all, and to live by faith on the Son of God, a life of humble unfeigned confidence in him. That scripture has often been sweet to me, Psal. cxv. I. 'Not unto us, oh Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.' And those words of Christ, Luke x. 21. 'In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, oh Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.' That sovereignty of God which Christ rejoiced in, seemed worthy to be rejoiced in; and that rejoicing of his seemed to show the excellency of Christ, and the spirit that he was of.

'The sweetest joys and delights I have experienced, have not been those that have arisen from [a hope of the goodness of my state, but in a direct view of the glorious things of the gospel. When I enjoy this sweetness, it seems to carry me above the thoughts of my own safety, so that I cannot bear to take off my eye from the glorious object I behold without me, to turn my eye in upon myself, and my own happy state and condition.'

Such remarks abound in the writings of the New England divines, and we have no right to deny what they assert upon their own experience. But when this attainment is made the test of christianity, and the criterion of true grace, it is carrying the matter too far. Supreme love to God is indeed essential to all true religion; but this, instead of teaching us to overlook or undervalue our own salvation, is necessarily included in it, as one of the principal mediums through which the glory of God is manifested. Nevertheless, there are times in which the mind may be so fully absorbed in the contemplation of the moral beauty and excellency of the Deity, as to have no immediate consciousness of regard to any other object; and this is all that the excellent Author could intend.

'My heart has been much set on the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world; the histories of its past success have been sweet to me. When I have read the histories of past ages, the most delightful of all has been, to read of the kingdom of Christ being promoted: and when I have expected to come to any such thing, I have counted upon it all the way as I read. I have also been much entertained and delighted with the scripture promises and prophecies of the future glorious advancement of Christ's kingdom on earth. Sometimes I have had a sense of the excellent ful-

ness of Christ, and his meetness and suitableness as a Saviour, whereby he has appeared to me, far above all, the chief of ten thousand. His blood and atonement have been precious to me, and also his righteousness sweet; and I have been filled with inward strugglings, and breathings, and groanings that cannot be uttered, to be emptied of myself, and swallowed up in Christ.

‘Once as I rode out into the woods for my health, Anno 1737, and having lighted from my horse in a retired place, as my manner commonly has been, to walk for divine contemplation and prayer, I had a view, that for me was extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God, as mediator between God and man; and his wonderful, great, full, pure, and sweet grace and love, and meek and gentle condescension. This grace, so calm and sweet, appeared great above the heavens. The person of Christ appeared with an excellency sufficient to swallow up all thought and conception, which continued, as near as I can judge, about an hour, which kept me the greater part of the time in a flood of tears, and weeping aloud. I felt withal an ardency of soul to be, what I know not otherwise how to express, than to be emptied and annihilated, to lie in the dust, and to be full of Christ alone; to love him with a holy and pure love, to trust in him, to live upon him, to serve and follow him, and to be totally wrapt up in the fulness of Christ; and to be perfectly sanctified and made pure, with a divine and heavenly purity. I have several other times had views very much of the same nature, and attended with the same effects.

‘I have many times had a sense of the glory of the third person in the Trinity, in his office of Sanctifier, in his holy operations communicating divine light and life to the soul. God, in the communications of his holy Spirit, has appeared as an infinite fountain of divine glory and sweetness; being full and sufficient to fill and satisfy the soul; pouring forth itself in sweet communications, like the sun in its glory, sweetly and pleasantly diffusing light and life. Sometimes I have had an affecting sense of the excellency of the word of God, as a word of life; as the light of life; a sweet, excellent, life-giving word; accompanied with a thirsting after that word, that it might dwell richly in my heart. Since I lived in this town I have often had very affecting views of my own sinfulness and vileness; very frequently so as to hold me in a kind of loud weeping, sometimes for a considerable time together; so that I have often been forced to shut myself up. I have had a vastly greater sense of my own wickedness, and the badness of my heart, since my conversion, than ever I had before. It has often appeared to me, that if God should mark iniquity against me, I should

appear the very worst of all mankind, of all that have been since the beginning of the world to this time; and that I should have by far the lowest place in hell. Yet I am not in the least inclined to think, that I have a greater conviction of sin than ordinary. I know certainly, that I have very little sense of my sinfulness; that my sins appear to me so great, is not owing to my having so much more conviction of sin than other christians, but because I am so much worse, and have so much more wickedness to be convinced of.

‘I have greatly longed of late for a broken heart, and to lie low before God. And when I ask for humility of God, I cannot bear the thought of being no more humble than other christians. It seems to me, that though their degrees of humility may be suitable for them, yet it would be a vile self-exaltation in me, not to be the lowest in humility of all mankind. Others speak of their longing to be humbled to the dust: though that may be a proper expression for them, I always think for myself, that I ought to be humbled down below hell. It is an expression that has long been natural for me to use in prayer to God. I ought to lie infinitely low before God.’

On this subject President Edwards seems to delight in hyperbolies; it may teach us however, that true grace is exceedingly humbling. The great apostle esteemed himself the ‘chief of sinners,’ and ‘less than the least of all saints.’ It is possible however to use extravagant expressions on any subject; and ‘to be humbled below hell,’ or ‘infinitely low,’ may be thought such. The humble and amiable Dr. Watts defined humility to consist in a man’s having ‘a just opinion of himself,’ not a degrading one. We are all so much indebted to divine mercy, that there seems little danger of hyperbolies on that subject; there is no occasion however to sink our language below the possibility of a meaning.

‘I have a greater sense of my universal exceeding dependence on God’s grace and strength, and mere good pleasure of late, than I used formerly to have; and have experienced more of an abhorrence of my own righteousness. The thought of any comfort or joy arising in me, on any consideration, or reflection on my own amiableness, or any of my performances or experiences, or any goodness of heart or life, is nauseous and detestable to me: and yet I am greatly afflicted with a proud and self-righteous spirit, much more sensibly than I used to be formerly. I see that serpent rising and putting forth its head continually, everywhere, all around me.

‘Though it seems to me, that in some respects, I was a far better christian for two or three years after my first conversion than I am now, and lived in a more constant delight and

pleasure; yet of late years I have had a more full and constant sense of the absolute sovereignty of God, and a delight in that sovereignty; and have had more of a sense of the glory of Christ, as a mediator, as revealed in the gospel. One Saturday night in particular I had a peculiar discovery of the excellency of the gospel of Christ, above all other doctrines, so that I could not but say to myself, 'This is my chosen light, my chosen doctrine;' and of Christ, 'This is my chosen prophet.' Another Saturday night I had such a sense how sweet and blessed a thing it was, to walk in the way of duty, that it caused me to cry out, 'How happy are they who do that which is right in the sight of God. They are blessed indeed, they are the happy ones!' I had at the same time a very affecting sense, how meet and suitable it was that God should govern the world, and order all things according to his own pleasure; and I rejoiced in it, that God reigned, and that his will was done.'

Thus closes the extraordinary experience of our Author, and by way of caution to sincere but inferior christians, we beg it be considered that it was *extraordinary*; that few christians have arrived to equal attainments in the divine life, particularly as to a settled acquiescence in the divine will, and a devotedness of heart to the Redeemer. But let us not consider his, or any man's experience, as an absolute criterion to try the safety of our state, or the truth of our conversion. The word of God is our rule, and the only one on which we can rely with certainty. There are as many degrees of growth in grace, as in nature; the beloved apostle wrote to children, young men, and fathers in Christ. And there is no less variety in the manner of the holy Spirit's operation. 'The wind bloweth where it listeth,' saith our divine teacher; 'and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.' John iii. 8. So free, so sovereign, so multiform and incomprehensible, are the operations of divine grace; but this remark is not intended to induce any to rest satisfied in their present attainments. It is not only the duty, but one of the best *criteria*, of a true christian, 'to go on unto perfection.' Heb. vi. 1.

We shall detain the reader with only one other remark on the preceding narrative, namely, That the subject of the subsequent work, the History of Redemption was long one of our author's most favorite topics of reflection. He was delighted, as we have seen, 'with the scripture promises and prophecies of the future glorious advancement of Christ's kingdom on earth.' And what is very observable, he even objected at first to accept the presidency of New Jersey College for this among other reasons—'I have had on my mind and heart,

which I long ago began, not with any view to publication, a great work, which I call a History of Redemption; and this he was at length enabled to accomplish.

We shall close our account of President Edwards with the following particulars of his habit of life, and character.

Though he was of a tender and delicate constitution, yet few students were capable of more close application than he was. He commonly spent thirteen hours every day in his study. His most usual diversions in the summer were riding on horseback and walking: he would commonly, unless diverted by company, ride two or three miles after dinner to some lonely grove, where he would dismount and walk a while. At these times he generally carried his pen and ink with him, to note any thought that should be suggested, which he chose to retain and pursue. In the winter he was wont, almost daily, to take an axe and chop wood moderately for the space of half an hour or more. He had an uncommon thirst for knowledge, in the pursuit of which he spared neither cost nor pains. He read all the books, especially books of divinity, that he could come at, from which he could hope to get any help in his pursuit of knowledge. He did not confine himself to authors of any particular sect or denomination, but took much pains to come at the books of the most celebrated writers, whose scheme of divinity was most contrary to his own principles: but he studied the Bible more than all other books, and more than most other divines do. His uncommon acquaintance with it appears in his sermons, and in most of his publications: and his great pains in studying it are manifest in his manuscript notes upon it. He was thought by some, who had but a slight knowledge of him, to be stiff and unsociable; but this was owing to want of better acquaintance. He was not a man of many words indeed, and was somewhat reserved among strangers; but among such whose candour and friendship he had experienced, he threw off the reserve, and was most open and free, and remarkably patient of contradiction. He was not used to spend his time in scandal, evil speaking, and backbiting, or in foolish jesting and idle chat; but his mouth was that of the just, which bringeth forth wisdom, and his lips dispersed knowledge; so that none of his friends could enjoy his company without instruction and profit, unless it was by their own fault. He kept himself quite free from worldly cares, and left the direction of the temporal concerns of his family almost entirely to Mrs. Edwards; who was better able than most of her sex, to take the whole care of them on her own hands.

Thus ornamental to the christian name and character, lived the excellent subject of these memoirs; and his death perfectly harmonized with the tenour of his life.

HISTORY OF REDEMPTION.



ISAIAH li. 8.

FOR THE MOTH SHALL EAT THEM UP LIKE A GARMENT, AND THE WORM SHALL EAT THEM LIKE WOOL: BUT MY RIGHTEOUSNESS SHALL BE FOR EVER, AND MY SALVATION FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION.

THE design of this chapter is to comfort the church under her sufferings, and the persecutions of her enemies; and the argument of consolation insisted on, is, The constancy and perpetuity of God's mercy and faithfulness, which shall be manifest in continuing to work salvation; protecting her against all assaults of her enemies, and carrying her through all the changes of the world, and finally crowning her with victory and deliverance.

In the text, this happiness of the church of God is set forth by comparing it with the contrary fate of her enemies that oppress her. And therein we may observe,

1. How short-lived the power and prosperity of the church's enemies is: 'The moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool;'^{*} that is, however great their prosperity, and however great their present glory, they shall by degrees consume and vanish away by a secret curse of God, till they come to nothing; and their power and glory, and consequently their persecutions, eter-

^{*} The MOTH and the WORM shall eat them. There is a slight inaccuracy in this rendering which is worth correcting, because it will throw a farther beauty on the text. It should seem that the word gaash, rendered moth, strictly signifies, not the moth-fly, but the moth-worm, or caterpillar, and receives its name from its corroding and destroying the texture of cloth.

nally cease; and themselves be finally and irrecoverably ruined: as the finest and most glorious apparel will in time wear away, and be consumed by moth and rottenness. We learn who those are that shall thus consume away, by the foregoing verse, viz. those that are the enemies of God's people: 'Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law, fear ye not the reproach of *men*, neither be ye afraid of *their* revilings.'

2. The contrary happy lot and portion of God's church, expressed in these words, 'My righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.' Also who those are that shall have the benefit of this, by the preceding verse, namely, 'They that know righteousness, and the people in whose heart is God's law;' or, in one word, the church of God. And concerning this their happiness we may observe two things, wherein it consists, and its continuance.

(1.) It consists in God's righteousness and salvation towards them. By God's righteousness here, is meant his faithfulness and fulfilling his covenant promises to his church; or his faithfulness towards his church and people, in bestowing the benefits of the covenant of grace upon them; which benefits, though they are bestowed of free and sovereign grace, and are altogether undeserved; yet as God has been pleased, by the promises of the covenant of grace, to bind himself to bestow them, so they are bestowed in the exercise of God's righteousness or justice. And therefore the apostle says, Heb. vi. 10, 'God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labour of love.' And the Evangelist, 1 John i. 9, 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' So the word righteousness is very often used in scripture for God's covenant faithfulness; as in Nehem. ix. 8. 'Thou hast performed thy words, for thou art righteous.' So we are often to understand righteousness and covenant mercy for

the same as Psal. xxiv. 5, 'He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.' Psal. xxxvi. 10. 'Continue thy loving kindness to them that know thee, and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.' Psalm li. 14. 'Deliver me from blood guiltiness, oh God, thou God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.' Dan. ix. 16. 'Oh Lord, according to thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away.' And so in innumerable other places.

The other word here used is 'salvation.' Of these, God's righteousness and his salvation, the one is the cause, of which the other is the effect. God's righteousness, or covenant mercy, is the root of which his salvation is the fruit. Both of them relate to the covenant of grace. The one is God's covenant mercy and faithfulness, the other intends that work by which this covenant mercy is accomplished. For salvation is the sum of all those works of God, by which the benefits of the covenant of grace are procured and bestowed.

(2.) Its continuance is here signified by two expressions, 'for ever,' and 'from generation to generation.' The latter seems to be explanatory of the former. The phrase for ever, is variously used in scripture. Sometimes thereby is meant as long as a man lives. Thus it is said, *Exod. xxi. 6*, The servant that had his ear bored through with an awl to the door of his master should serve him for ever. Sometimes thereby is meant during the continuance of the Jewish state. So of many of the ceremonial and Levitical laws it is said, that they should be statutes for ever. Sometimes it means as long as the world shall stand, or to the end of the generations of men. Thus *Eccles. i. 4*, 'One generation passeth away and another cometh; but the earth abideth for ever.' Sometimes thereby is meant to eternity. So it is said, 'God is blessed for ever,' *Rom. i. 25*. And *John vi. 51*, 'If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever.' Now which of

these senses is here intended the next word determines, 'and my salvation from generation to generation;' that is, to the end of the world. Indeed the fruits of God's salvation shall remain afterwards, as appears by the 6th verse: 'Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.' But the work of the salvation of the church shall continue to be wrought till then. Till the end of the world God will go on to accomplish deliverance and salvation for the church, from all her enemies: for that is what the prophet is here speaking of. Till the end of the world; till her enemies cease to be, or to have any power to molest the church. And this expression, from generation to generation, may determine us, as to the time which God continues to carry on the work of salvation for his church, both with respect to the beginning and end. It is from generation to generation, that is, throughout all generations; beginning with the first generation of men upon the earth, and not ending till these generations end, with the world itself. And therefore we deduce from these words this

DOCTRINE.

THE WORK OF REDEMPTION IS A WORK WHICH GOD CARRIES ON FROM THE FALL OF MAN TO THE END OF THE WORLD.

THE beginning of the posterity of our first parents was after the fall; for all their posterity, by ordinary generation, are partakers of the fall, and of the corruption of nature that followed from it; and these generations, by which the human race is propagated, shall continue to the end of the world; so these two are the limits of the generations of

men on the earth; the fall of man, and the end of the world. There are the same limits to the work of redemption, as to those progressive works of God, by which that redemption is accomplished; though not as to the fruits of it; for they, as was said before, shall be eternal.

The work of redemption and the work of salvation are the same thing. What is sometimes in scripture called God's saving his people, is in other places called his redeeming them. Christ is called both the Saviour and Redeemer of his people.

Before entering on the proposed History of the Work of Redemption, I would,

1. Explain the terms made use of in the doctrine;—and,
2. Show what are those things which are designed to be accomplished by this great work.

The WORK OF REDEMPTION is sometimes to be taken in a limited sense, for the purchase of salvation; (for so the word strictly signifies, a purchase of deliverance;) and if we take it in this sense, the work of redemption was not so long in doing: but it was begun and finished with Christ's humiliation. It was begun with Christ's incarnation, carried on through his life, and finished with his death, or the time of his remaining under the power of death, which ended in his resurrection: and so we say, that the day of Christ's resurrection is the day when he finished the work of redemption, that is, then the purchase was finished: and the work itself, and all that appertained to it, was virtually done, but not actually.

But sometimes the WORK OF REDEMPTION is taken more largely, as including all that God doth tending to this end; not only the purchase itself, but also all God's works that were properly preparatory to, or applicatory of the purchase, and accomplishing the success of it; so then the whole dispensation, as it includes the preparation, the purchase, and the application and success of Christ's redemption, may be called the work of redemption. All

that Christ does in this great affair as mediator, in any of his offices, either of prophet, priest, or king; either when he was in this world in his human nature, or before, or since: and not only what Christ the mediator has done, but also what the Father, or the Holy Ghost have done, as covenanted in this design of redeeming sinful men; or in one word, all that is wrought in execution of the eternal covenant of redemption; this is what I call the work of redemption in the doctrine: for it is all but one work, one design. The various dispensations or works that belong to it, are but the several parts of one scheme. It is but one design that is formed, to which all the offices of Christ directly tend; in which all the Persons of the Trinity conspire; and all the various dispensations that belong to it are united. The several wheels are one machine, to answer one end, and produce one effect.

When I say, this work is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world; I do not mean that nothing was done in order to it before the fall of man. Some things were done before the world was created, yea, from all eternity. The persons of the Trinity were, as it were, confederated in a design, and a covenant of redemption;* in which covenant the Father had appointed the Son, and the Son had undertaken the work; and all things to be accomplished in the work were stipulated and agreed; and besides these, there were things done at the creation of the world, in order to that work, before man fell; for the world itself seems to have been created in order to it. The work of creation was in order to God's works of providence; so that if it be inquired, which of these are the greatest,

* **THE PERSONS OF THE TRINITY.** Some serious persons have been offended at these terms as unscriptural and unwarrantable. It is acknowledged well to keep as much as may be to the phraseology, as well as doctrines of revelation; but it is not always possible, unless at least, we will talk Greek and Hebrew. As to the word **TRINITY**, since it implies no more than the union of Three in One, without leaning to any particular scheme of explication, those who believe the divine and mysterious union of Father, Son, and Spirit, in one Godhead, need hardly scruple it, however averse to human systems.

the works of creation, or the works of providence? I answer, the works of providence; because God's works of providence are the end of his works of creation; as the building of a house, or the forming of an engine or machine, is for its future use. But God's main work of providence is this great work of redemption, as will more fully appear hereafter.

The creation of heaven was in order to the work of redemption: it was to be an habitation for the redeemed. Matt. xxv. 34, 'Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' Even the angels were created to be employed in this work.* And therefore the apostle calls them 'ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation,' Heb. i. 14. As to this lower world, it was doubtless created to be a stage upon which this great and wonderful work of redemption should be transacted; and therefore, as might be shewn, in many respects this world is wisely fitted, in the formation, for such a state of man as he is in since the fall, under a possibility of redemption; so that when it is said, that the work of redemption is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world, it is not meant, that all that ever was done in order to redemption has been done since the fall.

Nor, is it meant that there will be no remaining fruits of this work after the end of the world. That glory and blessedness, which will be the sum of them all, will remain to the saints for ever. The

* HEAVEN (and the ANGELS) created in order to the work of redemption. That is, this was one of the ends God had then in view, but the supreme end was his own glory. See Prov. xvi. 4.

THIS WORLD created to be a stage for the work of redemption. This thought is certainly just and beautiful. Those who have considered the world as designed for only perfect creatures, have had many difficulties, which this idea at once removes. What would have become of our first parents, had they continued in a state of innocence? How the world would have contained all its successive generations at once? And the like inquiries are as impertinent as perplexing. God foreknew the fall—fore-ordained the mediator—and previously fitted the world to his own magnificent desigus.

work of redemption is not a work always doing and never accomplished; the work has an issue: but in the issue the end will be obtained; which end will never terminate. As those things that were in order to this work before the beginning of the world, viz. God's electing love, and the covenant of redemption, never had a beginning; so the fruits of this work, which shall be after the end of the world, will never have an end. And therefore,

When it is said in the doctrine, that this is a work that God is carrying on from the fall of man to the end of the world, what I mean, is, that those things which belong to the work itself, and are parts of this scheme, are all this while accomplishing. There were some things done preparatory to its beginning, and the fruits of it will remain after it is finished. But the work itself was begun immediately upon the fall, and will continue to the end of the world, and then be finished: the various dispensations of God in this space belong to the same work, and to the same design, and have all one issue; and therefore are all to be reckoned but as several parts of one work, as it were, several successive motions of one machine, to bring about, in the conclusion, one great event.

And here also we must distinguish between the parts of redemption itself, and the parts of that work by which redemption is wrought out. There is a difference between the parts of the benefits procured and bestowed, and the parts of that work of God by which those benefits were procured and bestowed. As, for example, there is a difference between the parts of the benefit that the children of Israel received, in their redemption out of Egypt, and the parts of that work of God by which this was wrought. The redemption of the children of Israel out of Egypt, considered as the benefit which they enjoyed, consisted of two parts, viz. their deliverance from their former Egyptian bondage and misery, and their being brought into a more happy state, as the servants of God, and heirs of Canaan.

But there are many more things which are parts of that work of God which is called his work of redeeming Israel out of Egypt. To this belong his calling of Moses, his sending him to Pharaoh, the signs and wonders he wrought in Egypt, and his bringing such terrible judgments on the Egyptians, and many other things.

Such is the work by which God effects the redemption we are speaking of: and it is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world, in two respects.

(1.) With respect to the effect wrought on the souls of the redeemed, which is common to all ages. This effect is the application of redemption with respect to the souls of particular persons, in converting, justifying, sanctifying, and glorifying them. Thus sinners are actually redeemed; and receive the benefit of the work of redemption in its effect upon their souls. And in this sense the work of redemption is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world. The work of God in converting souls, opening blind eyes, unstopping deaf ears, raising the spiritually dead to life, and rescuing miserable captives out of the hands of Satan, was begun soon after the fall of man, has been carried on ever since, and will be to the end. God has always, ever since the first erection of the church of the redeemed after the fall, had such a church in the world. Though oftentimes it has been reduced to a very narrow compass, and to low circumstances; yet it has never wholly failed.

And as God carries on the work of converting the souls of fallen men through all ages, so he goes on to justify them, to blot out their sins, to accept them as righteous in his sight, through the righteousness of Christ, and adopt and receive them from being the children of Satan, to be his own children; thus also he goes on to sanctify and complete the work of his grace begun in them, to comfort them with the consolations of his Spirit, and to bestow upon them when their bodies die, that eternal glory

which is the fruit of the purchase of Christ. What is said, Rom. viii. 30, ' Whom he did predestinate, them he also called ; and whom he called, them he also justified ; and whom he justified, them he also glorified ; ' is applicable to all ages, from the fall, to the end of the world.

The way that the work of redemption, with respect to these effects of it on the souls of the redeemed, is thus carried on, is by repeating and continually effecting the same work over again, though in different persons, from age to age. But, -

(2.) The work of redemption with respect to the grand design in general, as it respects the universal subject and end, is carried on in a different manner, not merely by repeating or renewing the same effect in the different subjects of it, but by many successive works and dispensations of God, all tending to one great end, all united as the several parts of one scheme, and all together making up one great work. Like as when a house or temple is built ; first, the workmen are engaged, then the materials are collected, the ground prepared, the foundation laid, the superstructure erected, one part after another, till at length the top-stone is laid, and all is finished. Now the work of redemption in that extensive sense which has been explained, may be compared to such a building. God began it immediately after the fall, as may be shown hereafter, and has proceeded, as it were, collecting materials, and building, ever since ; and so will continue to the end of the world ; and then shall the top-stone be brought forth, and the whole appear complete and glorious.

This work is carried on in the former respect, as to the effect on the souls of particular persons, by its being an effect that is common to all ages. The work is carried on in this latter respect, as it concerns the church of God, and the grand design in general, not only by that which is common to all ages, but by successive works, wrought in different ages, all parts of one great scheme. It is this carry-

ing on of the work of redemption that I shall chiefly insist upon, though not exclusively of the former; for one necessarily supposes the other.

Having thus explained what I mean by the terms of the doctrine; that you may the more clearly see how the great design and work of redemption is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world,

I now proceed to show what is the design of this great work, or what things are intended to be accomplished by it. In order to see how a design is carried on, we must first know what it is. To know how a workman proceeds, and to understand the various steps he takes in order to accomplish a piece of work, we must be informed what he is about, and what it is he intends to do; otherwise we may stand by, and see him do one thing after another, and be quite puzzled and in the dark; see nothing of his scheme, and understand nothing of what he means by it. If an architect, with a great number of hands, were building some great palace, and one that was a stranger to such things should stand by, and see some men digging in the earth, others bringing timber, others hewing stones, and the like, he might see that there was a great deal doing; but if he knew not the design, it would all appear to him confusion. And therefore, that the great works and dispensations of God which belong to this great affair of redemption may not appear like confusion to you, I shall set before you briefly the main things designed to be accomplished in this great work, to accomplish which God began to work so early after the fall, and will continue working until the whole shall be completely finished. Now the main things designed are these that follow.

(1.) To put all God's enemies under his feet, and that the goodness of God may finally triumph over all evil. Soon after the world was created, evil entered into the world in the fall of angels and of man. Presently after God had made rational creatures, there were enemies who rose up against him

here. Satan rose up against God, endeavouring to frustrate his design in the creation of this world, to destroy his workmanship here, to wrest the government out of his hands, to usurp the throne, and set up himself as god of this world, instead of the God that made it. For these ends he introduced sin into it, and having made man God's enemy, he brought guilt, death, and the most extreme and dreadful misery, into the world.

Now one grand design of God in the affair of redemption was, to reduce and subdue those his enemies till they should all be put under his feet. 1 Cor. xv. 25. 'He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.' Things were originally so planned that he might disappoint, confound, and triumph over Satan, and that he might be bruised under Christ's feet. Gen iii. 15. The promise was given, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. It was a part of God's original design in this work, to destroy the work of the devil, and confound him in all his purposes. 1 John iii. 8. 'For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.' It was a part of his design, to triumph over sin, and over the corruptions of men, and to root them out of the hearts of his people, by conforming them to himself. He designed also, that his grace should triumph over man's guilt, and the infinite demerit which is in sin.* Again, it was a part of his design to triumph over death; and however this is the last enemy that shall be overcome, yet that shall finally be vanquished and destroyed.

Thus God will appear glorious above all evil,

* God designed that his grace should triumph over man's GUILT. 'Though the guilt of man was like the great mountains, whose heads are lifted up to the heavens; yet his (Christ's) dying love, and his merits in this, appeared as a mighty deluge that overflowed the highest mountains; or like a boundless ocean that swallows them up; or like an immense fountain of light, that with the fulness and redundancy of its brightness, swallows up mens' greatest sins, as little notes are swallowed up and hidden in the disk of the sun.' Pres. Edwards's Posthumous Sermon, p. 138.

and triumphant over all his enemies, which was one grand thing intended by the work of redemption.

(2.) God's design was perfectly to restore the ruins of the fall, so far as concerns the elect part of the world, by his Son; and therefore we read of the restitution of all things. Acts iii. 21. 'Whom the heaven must receive, until the times of the restitution of all things;' and of the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord Jesus. Acts iii. 19. 'Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.'

Man's soul was ruined by the fall; the image of God was defaced; man's nature was corrupted, and he became dead in sin. The design of God was, to restore the soul of man; to restore life, and the image of God in conversion; and to carry on this work in sanctification, until he should perfect it in glory. Man's body was ruined; by the fall it became subject to death. The design of God was to restore it from this ruin, and not only to deliver it from death, by the resurrection, but to deliver it from mortality itself, in making it like unto Christ's glorious body. The world was ruined, as to man, as effectually as if it had been reduced to chaos again; all heaven and earth were overthrown. But the design of God was to restore all, and as it were to create a new heaven and a new earth. Isai. lxxv. 17. 'Behold I create new heavens, and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.' 2 Pet. iii. 13, 'Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.'

The work by which this was to be done, was begun immediately after the fall, and so is carried on till all is finished at the end, when the whole world, heaven and earth shall be restored; and there shall be as it were, new heavens and a new earth, in a spiritual and sublime sense, at the end of the world. Thus it is represented, Rev. xxi. 1, 'And I saw a

new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away.'

(3.) Another great design of God in the work of redemption was to gather together in one, all things in Christ, both in heaven and in earth, that is, all elect creatures, in heaven and in earth, to an union in one body, under one head; and to unite all together in one body to God the Father. This was begun soon after the fall, and is carried on throughout all ages, and shall be finished at the end of the world.

(4.) God designs by this work to perfect and complete the glory of all the elect of Christ. To advance them to an exceeding pitch of glory, 'such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor has ever entered into the heart of man.' He intends to bring them to perfect excellency and beauty in his image, and in holiness, which is the proper beauty of spiritual beings; and to advance them to a glorious degree of honour, an ineffable height of pleasure and joy, and thus to glorify the whole church of elect men in soul and body; and with them to bring the glory of the elect angels to its highest elevation under one head.

(5.) In all this God designed to accomplish the glory of the blessed Trinity in an eminent degree. God had a design from eternity to glorify each person in the Godhead. The end must be considered as first in order of nature, and then the means; and therefore we must conceive, that God having professed this end, had then as it were, the means to chuse; and the principal mean that he pitched upon was this great work of redemption which we are speaking of. It was his design in this work to glorify his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ; and by the Son to glorify the Father. John xiii 31, 32. 'Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God also shall glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.' It was his design that the Son should thus be glorified, and should glorify the Father by what should be accomplished by the Spirit, to the

*to glorify means to illustrate
to put into luminous man*

glory of the Spirit; that the whole Trinity conjunctly, and each person distinctly, might be exceedingly glorified. The work which was the appointed mean of this was begun immediately after the fall, and is carried on to the end of the world, when all this intended glory shall be fully accomplished.

Having thus explained the terms made use of in the doctrine, and shown what things are to be accomplished by this great work of God, I proceed now to the proposed History; that is, to show how the designs of God by the work of redemption have been and shall be accomplished, in the various steps of this work, from the fall of man to the end of the world.

In order to this, I shall divide this whole space of time into three periods:—(1) From the Fall of Man to the Incarnation of Christ;—(2) From Christ's Incarnation till his Resurrection;—(3) From thence to the end of the world.

Some may be ready to think this a very unequal division; and it is so indeed in some respects. It is so, because the second period is so much the greatest: for although it be much shorter than either of the other, (being but between thirty and forty years, whereas both the other contain thousands;) yet in the affair we are now upon, it is more than both the others. I would therefore proceed to show distinctly how the work of redemption is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world, through each of these periods in their order; which I shall do under three propositions, one concerning each period.

1. From the Fall of Man to the Incarnation of Christ, God was doing those things which were preparatory to his Coming, and earnest of his Redemption.

2. That the time from Christ's Incarnation, to his Resurrection, was employed in procuring and purchasing Redemption

3. That the space of time from the Resurrection of Christ to the end of the world is all engaged in bringing about the great effect, or success of that purchase.

In a particular consideration of these three propositions, the great truth contained in the doctrine may perhaps appear in a clear light, and we may see how the work of redemption is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world.

PERIOD I.

FROM THE FALL TO THE INCARNATION.

MY first task is, to show how the work of redemption is carried on from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ, under the first proposition; viz. *That from the Fall of Man to the Incarnation of Christ, God was doing those things which were preparatory to his Coming, and earnest of his Redemption.*

The great works of God in the world, during this whole space of time, were all preparatory to this. There were many great changes and revolutions in the world, but they were only the turning of the wheels of providence in order to make way for the coming of Christ, and what he was to do in the world. They were all pointed hither, and all issued here. Hither tended, especially, all God's great works towards his church. The church was under various dispensations and in various circumstances, before Christ came; but all these dispensations were to prepare the way for his coming. God wrought salvation for the souls of men through all that space of time, though the number was very small to what it was afterwards; and all his salvation was, as it were, by way of anticipation. All the souls that

were saved before Christ came, were only, as it were, the earnest of the future harvest.

God wrought many lesser salvations and deliverances for his church and people before Christ came. These salvations were all but so many images and forerunners of the great salvation Christ was to work out when he should come. God revealed himself of old, from time to time, from the fall of man to the coming of Christ. The church during that space of time enjoyed the light of divine revelation, and in a degree, the light of the gospel. But all these revelations were only earnest of the great light that he should bring, who came to be 'the light of the world;' that whole space of time was, as it were, the time of night, wherein the church of God was not indeed wholly in darkness, but it was like the light of the moon and stars, and not to be compared with the light of the sun. It 'had no glory, by reason of the glory that excelleth.' 2 Cor. iii. 10. The church had indeed the light of the sun, but it was only as reflected from the moon and stars. The church all that while may be considered as a minor; this the apostle evidently teaches in Gal. iv. 1—3. 'Now I say, that the heir as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the Father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.'

But here, for the greater clearness and distinctness, I shall subdivide this period from the fall of man to the coming of Christ into six lesser periods:—(1) From the fall to the flood;—(2) From the flood to the call of Abraham;—(3) From the call of Abraham to Moses;—(4) From Moses to David;—(5) From David to the Babylonish captivity;—and (6) From thence to the Incarnation of Christ.

I. FROM THE FALL TO THE FLOOD.

THIS was a period farthest of all distant from Christ's incarnation; yet then was this great work begun, this glorious building which will not be finished till the end of the world; and this is what I am now to show you. To this purpose I would observe,

1. As soon as man fell, Christ entered on his mediatorial work. Then it was that he first began to execute the work and office of a mediator. He had undertaken it before the world was made. He stood engaged with the Father from eternity to appear as man's Mediator, when there should be occasion: and now the time was come. When man fell, Christ immediately entered on his work, and actually took upon him that office. Then Christ, the eternal Son of God, clothed himself with the mediatorial character, and therein presented himself before the Father. He immediately stepped in between an holy, infinite, offended Majesty, and offending mankind; and was accepted in his interposition; and thus wrath was prevented from going forth in the full execution of that curse which man had brought upon himself.

It is manifest that Christ began to exercise the office of mediator between God and man as soon as man fell, because mercy began to be exercised towards man immediately. There was mercy in the forbearance of God, that he did not destroy him, as he did the angels when they fell: but there is no mercy exercised toward fallen man, but through a mediator. If God had not in mercy restrained Satan, he would have immediately seized on his prey. Christ began to do the part of an intercessor for man, as soon as he fell. There is no mercy exercised towards man, but what is obtained through Christ's intercession: so that now Christ entered on that work which he was to continue throughout all ages of the world. From that day forward Christ

took upon him the care of the church, in the exercise of all his offices; from thence he undertook to teach mankind, in the exercise of his prophetic office; to intercede for them, in his priestly office; also he took upon him, the government of the church, and of the world. He from that time took upon him the defence of his elect from all their enemies. When Satan, the grand enemy, had conquered and overthrown man, the business of resisting and conquering him was committed to Christ; and he undertook to manage that subtle powerful adversary. He was then appointed the captain of their salvation, and ever after acted, and will continue to act, as such to the end of the world. Thenceforward this world, with all its concerns, was as it were, devolved upon the Son of God: for when man had sinned, God the Father would have no more to do with man immediately; but only through a mediator; either in teaching, in governing, or in bestowing any benefits upon him.

And therefore, when we read in sacred history what God did from time to time for his church and people, and how he revealed himself to them, we are to understand it especially of the second person of the Trinity. When we read of God's appearing after the fall, frequently in some visible form, or outward symbol of his presence, we are ordinarily, if not universally, to understand it of the Son of God. This may be argued from John i. 18, 'No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.' He is therefore called 'the image of the invisible God,' intimating, that though God the Father be invisible, yet Christ is his image, or representation, by which he is seen.

Yea, not only this world devolved on Christ, that he might have the care and government of it, and order it agreeably to his design of redemption, but also in some respect, the whole universe. The angels from that time were given unto him, to be ministering spirits in this grand business; and ac-

cordingly were so from this time, as is manifest by the scripture history, wherein we have accounts of their acting as such in the affairs of the church of Christ, from time to time.

And therefore we may suppose, that immediately on the fall, it was made known in heaven that God had a design of redemption with respect to man; that Christ had now taken upon him the office and work of a mediator between God and man; and that the angels were henceforward to be subservient to him in that office: and as Christ has been, since that time, as God-man, exalted King of heaven; and is thenceforward as Mediator, the Light, and the Sun of heaven, (agreeable to Rev. xxi. 23, 'And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof;') so the revelation now made in heaven among the angels, was as it were, the first dawning of this light there. When Christ ascended into glory after his passion, and was solemnly enthroned, then this Sun arose in heaven; but the light began to dawn immediately after the fall.

2. Soon after this the gospel was first revealed on earth, in these words: 'I will put enmity between thee (the serpent) and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.' Gen iii. 15. We may suppose, that God's intention of redeeming fallen man was first signified in heaven before it was signified on earth, because the business of the angels as ministering spirits required it, that they might be ready immediately to serve him in that office: so that the light first dawned in heaven, but very soon after was seen on earth. In those words of God there was an intimation of another surety to be appointed for man, after the first had failed. This was the first revelation of the covenant of grace, the first dawn of light of the gospel upon earth.

This world before the fall enjoyed noon-day light; the light of the knowledge of God, of his glory, and

of his favour: but when man fell, all this sight was at once extinguished, and the world reduced again to total darkness; a darkness worse than that which was in the beginning of the world. Gen. i. 2. Neither men nor angels could find out any way whereby this might be scattered. The blackness of this darkness appeared when Adam and his wife knew that they were naked, and sewed fig leaves; when they heard the voice of God walking in the garden, and hid themselves among the trees, when God had first called them to an account, and said to Adam, 'What is this that thou hast done? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?' Then we may suppose that their hearts were filled with shame and terror. But those words of God, Gen. iii. 15, were the first dawning of the light of the gospel after this darkness. Now first appeared some glimmering of light; but it was an obscure revelation of the gospel, and was not made to Adam or Eve directly, but in what God said to the serpent. It was however very comprehensive, as might be easily shown, would it not take up too much time.

Here was an intimation of a merciful design by 'the seed of the woman,' which was like the first glimmerings of light in the east when the day dawns. This intimation of mercy was given before sentence was pronounced on either Adam or Eve, from tenderness to them, to whom God designed mercy, lest they should be overborne with a sentence of condemnation, without having any thing held forth whence they could gather any hope.

One of those great things that were intended to be done by the work of redemption, is more plainly intimated here than the rest, viz. God's subduing his enemies under the feet of his Son. This was threatened now, and God's design of it now first declared. This was the work Christ had now undertaken, which he soon began, has carried on, and will accomplish at the end of the world. Satan probably triumphed greatly in the fall of man, as though he

fig leaves

had defeated God's designs : but in these words God gives him a plain intimation, that he should not finally triumph, but that a complete victory should be obtained over him by the seed of the woman.

This revelation of the gospel was the first thing that Christ did in his prophetic office. You may remember, that it was said in the first of our three propositions, that from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ, God was doing those things which were preparatory to Christ's coming and working out redemption, and forerunners and earnestings of it. And one of those things which God did in this time to prepare the way for Christ's coming into the world, was to foretel and promise it, as he did from time to time, from age to age, till Christ came. This was the first promise given, the first prediction made of it upon the earth.

3. Soon after this, the custom of sacrificing was appointed to be a standing type of the sacrifice of Christ till he should come, and offer up himself to God. Sacrificing was not a custom first established by the Levitical law ; for it had been a part of God's instituted worship long before, even from the beginning of God's visible church on earth. We read of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, offering sacrifice, and even before them Noah and Abel : and this was by divine appointment ; for it was part of God's worship in his church, and that which he accepted, when offered up in faith ; which proves it was by his institution, for sacrificing is no part of natural worship. The light of nature doth not teach men to offer up beasts in sacrifice to God ; and seeing it was not enjoined by the law of nature, if it was acceptable to God, it must be by some positive command or institution : for God has declared his abhorrence of such worship as is taught by the precepts of men, without his appointment. *Isai. xxix. 13.* ' Wherefore the Lord saith, Forasmuch as this people draw near to me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear towards me is

taught by the precepts of men, therefore behold I will proceed to do a marvellous work,' &c. And such worship as hath not a warrant from divine institution, cannot be offered up in faith; because faith has no foundation where there is no divine appointment. It cannot be offered up in faith of God's acceptance; for man hath no warrant to hope for God's acceptance in that which is not of his appointment, and to which he hath not promised his acceptance; and therefore it follows, that the custom of offering sacrifices to God was instituted soon after the fall; for the scripture teaches us, that Abel offered 'the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof,' Gen. iv. 4; and that he was accepted of God in this offering. Heb. xi. 4. And there is nothing in the story that looks as though the institution was first given when Abel offered up that sacrifice to God; but it appears as though he only therein complied with a custom already established.

It is very probable that sacrifice was instituted immediately after God had revealed the covenant of grace; which covenant and promise was the foundation on which the custom of sacrificing was built. Gen. iii. 15. That promise was the first stone that was laid towards this glorious building, the work of redemption, which will be finished at the end of the world. And the next stone which was laid upon that, was the institution of sacrifices, to be a type of the great atonement.

The next thing that we have an account of, after God had pronounced sentence on the serpent, on the woman, and on the man, was, that God made them coats of skins, and clothed them; which, by the generality of divines, are thought to be the skins of beasts slain in sacrifice; for we have no account of any thing else that should be the occasion of men slaying beasts, but only to offer them in sacrifices, till after the flood. Men were not till then allowed to eat the flesh of beasts. The food of man before the fall, was the fruit of the trees of paradise; and when he was turned out of paradise after the fall,

what did he mean, or what was the nature of the sacrifice, or of the more or less of the atonement, + God as the author of the atonement

his food was the herb of the field : ' And thou shalt eat of the herb of the field.' Gen. iii. 18. The first grant that he had to eat flesh as his common food was after the flood. Gen. xi. 3. ' Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you ; even as the green herb have I given you all things.' So that it is likely that these skins that Adam and Eve were clothed with, were the skins of their sacrifices. God's clothing them with these was a lively figure of their being clothed with the righteousness of Christ. This clothing was not of their own obtaining ; but it was God that gave it them. It is said, ' God made them coats of skins, and clothed them,' Gen. xiii. 21 ; as the righteousness our naked souls are clothed with is not our righteousness, but the righteousness which is of God. It is he alone that clothes the naked soul.

Our first parents, who were naked, were clothed at the expense of life. Beasts were slain to afford them clothing. So Christ died to afford clothing to our naked souls. Thus our first parents were covered with skins of sacrifices, as the tabernacle in the wilderness, which signified the church, was, when it was covered with rams' skins dyed red, as though they were dipped in blood, to signify that Christ's righteousness was wrought out through the pains of death, under which he shed his precious blood.

We observed before, that the light which the church enjoyed from the fall of man till Christ came, was like the light which we enjoy in the night ; not the light of the sun directly, but as reflected from the moon and planets ; which light did foreshow Christ, the Sun of righteousness, which was afterwards to arise. This light they had chiefly two ways : one was by predictions of Christ, wherein his coming was foretold and promised ; the other by types and shadows, in which his coming and redemption were prefigured. The first thing that was done to prepare the way for Christ in the former of these ways, was in the promise above considered ; and the first thing of the latter kind, viz. of types,

was the institution of sacrifices. As that promise, Gen iii. 15, was the first dawn of gospel light after the fall in prophecy; so this institution was the first hint of it in types. The giving of that promise was the first thing done after the fall in this work, in Christ's prophetic office; the institution of sacrifices was the first thing that we read of after the fall, by which Christ exhibited himself in his priestly office.

The institution of sacrifices was a great thing done towards preparing the way for Christ's coming, and working out redemption. For the sacrifices of the Old Testament were the principal of all the Old Testament types of Christ and his redemption; and it tended to establish in the minds of God's visible church the necessity of a propitiatory sacrifice, in order to the Deity's being satisfied for sin; and so prepared the way for the reception of the glorious gospel that reveals the great sacrifice, not only in the visible church, but through the world of mankind. For from this institution of sacrifices after the fall, all nations derived the same custom. No nation, however barbarous, has been found without it any where. This is a great evidence of the truth of revealed religion; for no nation, but only the Jews, could tell how they came by this custom, or to what purpose it was to offer sacrifices to their deities. The light of nature did not teach them any such thing. That did not teach them that the gods were hungry, and fed upon the flesh which they burnt in sacrifice; and yet they all had this custom; of which no other account can be given, but that they derived it from Noah, who had it from his ancestors, on whom God had enjoined it as a type of the great sacrifice of Christ. However, by this means all nations of the world had their minds possessed with this notion, that an atonement or sacrifice for sin was necessary; and a way was made for their more readily receiving that great doctrine of the gospel, which teaches us the atonement and sacrifice of Christ.

4. God soon after the fall actually began to save the souls of men through Christ's redemption. In this, Christ who had lately taken upon him the work of Mediator between God and man, did first begin to exercise his kingly office. In the first prediction the light of Christ's redemption first began to dawn in the prophecies of it; in the institution of sacrifices it first began to dawn in the types of it; in his beginning actually to save men, it first began to dawn in the fruit of it.

It is probable, therefore, that Adam and Eve were the first fruits of Christ's redemption;* it is probable by God's manner of treating them, by his comforting them as he did, after their awakenings and

* Adam and Eve the *first fruits* of Christ's redemption. Milton has beautifully and evangelically illustrated this supposition in the following manner---

They forthwith to the place
Repairing where he judged them, prostrate fell
Before him reverent, and both confess'd
Humbly their faults, and pardon begg'd, with tears
Watering the ground, and with their sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek.

Thus they in lowliest plight repentant stood
Praying; for from the mercy-seat above
Preventive grace descending had removed
The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh
Regenerate grow instead, that sighs now breath'd
Unutterable, which the Spirit of prayer
Inspir'd, and wing'd for heav'n with speedier flight
Than loudest oratory

To heav'n their pray'rs
Flew up, nor miss'd the way, by envious winds
Blown vagabond or frustrate; in they pass'd
Dimensionless through heav'nly doors; then clad
With incense, where the golden altar fum'd,
By their great Intercessor, came in sight
Before the Father's throne: them the glad Son
Presenting, thus to intercede began:

See, Father, what first fruits on earth are sprung
From thy implanted grace in man, these sighs
And pray'ers, which in this golden censor, mix'd
With incense, I thy priest before thee bring;
Fruits of more pleasing savour from thy seed
Sown with contrition in his heart, than those
Which his own hand manuring all the trees
Of Paradise could have produc'd, ere fall'n
From innocence. Now therefore bend thine ear
To supplication: hear his sighs though mute,
Unskilful with what words to pray, let me

terrors. They were awakened and ashamed with a sense of their guilt, after their fall, when their eyes were opened, and they saw that they were naked, and sewed fig-leaves to cover their nakedness ; like the sinner who under his first conviction endeavours to hide the nakedness of his soul by a righteousness of his own. Then they were farther awakened and terrified by hearing the voice of God, as he was coming to judge them. Their coverings of fig-leaves would not answer their purpose ; for notwithstanding these, they ran to hide themselves among the trees of the garden, not daring to trust to their fig-leaves to hide their nakedness from God. Then they were farther awakened by God's calling them to a strict account. But while their terrors were raised to such a height, and they stood, as we may suppose, trembling and astonished before their judge, without any thing to catch hold of, whence they could gather hope ; then God condescended to hold forth some encouragement to them, to keep them from the dreadful effects of despair under their awakenings, by giving a hint of a design of mercy by a Saviour, even before he pronounced sentence against them. And when, after this, he proceeded to pronounce sentence, whereby we may suppose their terrors were farther raised, God was pleased to encourage them, and to let them see that he had not wholly cast them off, by taking a fatherly care of them, making them coats of skins and cloathing them. This also manifested an acceptance of those sacrifices offered to God, (of which these were the skins) which were types of what God had promised, when he said, ' the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head ; ' which promise, there is reason to think, they believed and embraced. Eve seems plainly to express her hopes in, and dependence on,

Interpret for him, me his advocate
 And propitiation ; all his works on me,
 Good or not good, ingraft ; my merit those
 Shall perfect, and for these my death shall pay.

Par. Lost, Book x. xi.

that promise, at what she says at the birth of Cain, Gen. iv. 1, 'I have gotten a man from the Lord;' i. e. as God has promised, that my seed should bruise the serpent's head; so now has God given me this pledge and token of it, that I have a seed born. She plainly owns, that this her child was from God, and hoped that her promised seed was to be this her eldest son; though she was mistaken, as Abraham was with respect to Ishmael, as Jacob with respect to Esau, and as Samuel with respect to the first-born of Jesse. Also what she said at the birth of Seth, expresses her hope and dependence on the promise of God; see ver. 25. 'For God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.'

Thus it is exceedingly probable, if not demonstrable, that as Christ took on him the work of mediator when man fell, so he now actually began his work of redemption, encountered his great enemy the devil, whom he had undertaken to conquer, and rescued those two first captives out of his hands; therein baffling him soon after his triumph in the victory he had obtained over our first parents. And though he might be sure of them and all their posterity, Christ the Redeemer soon convinced him of his mistake, and that he was able to subdue him, and deliver fallen man. He let him see it, in delivering those first captives of his; and so gave him an instance of his fulfilment of that threatening, 'The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head;' and a presage of the fulfilment of one great thing he had undertaken, viz. his subduing all his enemies under his feet.

After this we have another instance of redemption in one of their children, viz. in 'righteous Abel,' as the scripture calls him, whose soul perhaps was the first that went to heaven through Christ's redemption. In him we have at least the first instance recorded in scripture of the death of a redeemed person. If he was the first, then, as the redemption of Christ began to dawn before in the souls of men

in their conversion and justification, in him it first began to dawn in glorification, and at his death the angels began first to act as ministering spirits to Christ, in conducting the souls of the redeemed to glory. And in him others in heaven had the first opportunity of seeing so wonderful a thing, as a human soul, that had been sunk into an abyss of sin and misery, brought to heaven and glory; which was a much greater thing, than if they had seen man return to the earthly paradise. Thus they by this saw the glorious effect of Christ's redemption, in the great honour and happiness that was procured for sinful, miserable creatures by it.

5. The next remarkable thing that God did in the farther carrying on this great affair of redemption, that I shall take notice of, was the first out-pouring of the Spirit through Christ, which was in the days of Enos. We read, Gen. iv. 26, 'Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.' The meaning of these words has been considerably controverted among divines. We cannot suppose the meaning is, that then men first performed the duty of prayer. Prayer is a duty of natural religion, and a duty to which a spirit of piety does most naturally lead men. Prayer is, as it were, the very breath of a pious spirit, and we cannot suppose therefore, that holy men had lived for above two hundred years without prayer. Therefore some divines think, that the meaning is, that then men first began to perform public worship, or to call upon the name of the Lord in public assemblies. Whether it be so to be understood or not, yet certainly there was now something new in the visible church of God with respect to the duty of prayer, or calling upon the name of the Lord, which was the consequence of the out-pouring of the Spirit of God.

If it was now first that men were stirred up to meet together in assemblies, to assist one another in seeking God so as they had never done before, it argues something extraordinary as the cause; and could be from nothing but the uncommon influences

of God's Spirit. We may observe, that a remarkable out-pouring of God's Spirit always produces a great increase of prayer. When the Spirit of God begins a work on men's hearts, it immediately sets them to calling on the name of the Lord. As it was with Paul after the Spirit of God had laid hold on him, then it is said, Acts ix. 11, 'Behold he prayeth!' So it was in all the instances which we have any account of in scripture; and so will it be in the great effusion of the Spirit in the latter days. It is foretold, that it will be poured out as a spirit of grace and supplication. Zech. xii. 10. See also Zeph. iii. 9, 'For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.'

And when it is said, 'Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord,' no more can be intended by it, than that this was the first remarkable season of this nature that ever was. It was the beginning, or the first of such a kind of work of God, such an out-pouring of the Spirit of God. After this manner such an expression is commonly used in scripture: 'And Saul built an altar unto the Lord; the same was the first altar that he built unto the Lord.' 1 Sam. xiv. 35. In the Hebrew it is, as you may see in the margin, 'that altar he began to build unto the Lord.' 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which first began to be spoken by the Lord?' Heb. ii. 3.

It may here be observed, that from the fall of man to this day, the work of redemption in its effect has been carried on by the same means. Though there be a more constant influence of God's Spirit always in some degree attending his ordinances; yet the way in which the greatest things have been done towards carrying on this work, always has been by remarkable effusions of the Spirit at special seasons of mercy, as will fully appear hereafter. And this, in the days of Enos, was the first remarkable effusion of the Spirit of God recorded. There had been a saving work of God on the hearts of some before;

but now God was pleased to grant a larger portion of his Spirit ; so that here we see that great building which God laid the foundation of immediately after the fall, carried on farther, and built higher than ever it had been before.

6. The next thing I shall take notice of, is the eminently holy life of Enoch, who we have reason to think was a saint of greater eminence than any that had been before him ; so that in this respect the work of redemption was carried on to a still greater height. With respect to its effect in the visible church in general, we observed above that it was carried higher in the days of Enos than ever before. Probably Enoch was one of the saints of that harvest ; for he lived all the days that he did live on earth, in the days of Enos. And with respect to the degree to which this work was carried in the soul of a particular person, it was raised to a greater height in Enoch than ever before. His soul, as it was built on Christ, was built up in holiness to a greater height than any of his predecessors. He was a wonderful instance of Christ's redemption, and of the efficacy of his grace.

7. In Enoch's time God more expressly revealed the coming of Christ than he had before done. We have an account of the prophecy of Enoch in the 14th and 15th verses of Jude : ' And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.' This prophecy does not seem to be confined to any particular coming of Christ ; but it has respect in general to his coming in his kingdom, and is fulfilled in a degree, in every remarkable manifestation Christ has made of himself in the world, for the salvation of his people, and the destruction of his enemies. It is very parallel in this respect with many other prophecies given

under the Old Testament ; and in particular, with that in the 7th chapter of Daniel, whence the Jews principally took their notion of the kingdom of heaven, ver. 10. ‘ A fiery stream issued, and came forth from before him ; thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him ; the judgment was set, and the books were opened.’ And ver. 13, 14. ‘ I saw in the night vision, and behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him : his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.’ And though it is not unlikely that Enoch might have a more immediate respect, in this prophecy, to the approaching destruction of the old world by the flood, which was a remarkable resemblance of Christ’s destruction of all his enemies at his second coming, yet it doubtless looked beyond the type to the antitype.

And as this prophecy of Christ’s coming is more fully expressed than any preceding one, so it is an instance of the increase of that gospel light which began to dawn presently after the fall, or of that building which is the subject of our present discourse, being farther carried on, and built up higher than it had been before.

And here, by the way, I would observe, that the increase of gospel light, and the progress of the work of redemption, as it respects the church in general, from its erection to the end of the world, is very similar to the progress of the same work, and the same light, in a particular soul, from the time of its conversion, till it is perfected and crowned in glory. Sometimes the light shines brighter, and at others more obscurely ; sometimes grace prevails, and at other times it seems to languish for a great while together. But in general, grace is growing : from its first erection till it is completed in glory, the

kingdom of Christ is building up in the soul. So it is with respect to the great affair in general, as it relates to the universal subject of it, and as it is carried on from its first beginning to the end of the world.

8. The next remarkable thing in carrying on this work, was the translation of Enoch into heaven. Gen. v. 4. 'And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.' Moses, in giving an account of the genealogy of those that were of the line of Noah, does not say concerning Enoch, he lived so long and he died, as he does of the rest; but, 'he was not, for God took him;' i. e. he translated him; in body and soul carried him to heaven without dying, as it is explained in Heb. ix. 5. 'By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death.' By this wonderful work of God, the work of redemption was carried to a greater height in several respects, than it had been before.

You may remember, that when I shewed you what were the great things that God intended in the work of redemption; among other things I mentioned the perfect restoration of the ruins of the fall, with respect to the elect, both in soul and body. Now this translation of Enoch, was the first instance of this restoration with respect to the body. There had been many instances of restoring the soul of man by Christ's redemption, but none of the body, until now. At the end of the world, all the bodies of the saints shall actually be redeemed; the dead in Christ by a resurrection, and them that shall remain alive by a glorious change. A number of the bodies of the saints were raised at the resurrection of Christ; and before then there was an instance of a body glorified in Elijah: but the first instance was this of Enoch, of which we are now speaking.

Now the work of redemption in this instance was carried on still farther; as thereby was a great increase of gospel light, and the church had a clearer manifestation of a future state, and of the glorious reward of the saints in heaven. We are told, 2 Tim.

i. 10, 'That life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel.' And the more of this gospel is revealed, the more clearly does the light of life and immortality appear. What was said in the Old Testament of a future state, is very obscure, in comparison with the more full, plain, and abundant revelation given of it in the New. But yet even in those early days, the church of God, in this instance, was favoured with an evidence of it set before their eyes, in that one of their brethren was actually taken up to heaven without dying; which we have reason to think the church of God knew then, as they afterwards knew Elijah's translation. And as this was a clearer manifestation of a future state than the church had had before; so it was a pledge or earnest of that future glorification of all the saints, which God intended through the redemption of Jesus Christ.

9. The next thing that I shall observe, was the upholding the church of God in that family of which Christ was to come, in the time of the great and general defection before the flood. The church, in all probability, was small in comparison with the rest of the world, from the time that mankind first began to multiply on the face of the earth, or from the time of Cain's defection, and departing from among the people of God. Gen. iv. 16. When 'Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod,' it may be understood of the land of banishment. I say, from this time of Cain's departure and separation from the church of God, it is probable that the church of God was small in comparison with the rest of the world. The church seems to have been kept up chiefly in the posterity of Seth; for this was the seed that God appointed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew. But we cannot reasonably suppose that Seth's posterity was one fiftieth part of the world: 'for Adam was one hundred and thirty years old when Seth was born.' But Cain, who seems to have been the leader of those that were not of the church, was Adam's

eldest child, and probably was born soon after the fall, which doubtless was soon after Adam's creation: so that there was time for Cain to have many sons before Seth was born: besides other children that probably Adam and Eve had before this time, (agreeable to God's blessing, 'Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth;') and many of these children might also have children. The history of Cain before Seth's birth seems to imply that there were great numbers of men on the earth. Gen. iv. 14, 15. 'Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid, and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me. And the Lord said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him seven-fold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.' And those that were in being when Seth was born, must be supposed to stand in equal capacity of multiplying their posterity with him; and therefore, as I said, Seth's posterity were but a small part of the inhabitants of the world.

But after the days of Enos and Enoch, (for Enoch was translated before Enos died) I say, after their days the church of God greatly diminished, in proportion as multitudes that were of the line of Seth, and had been born in the church of God, fell away, and joined with the wicked world, principally by means of intermarriages with them. Gen. vi. 1---4. 'And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.--- There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men, which were of old, men of renown.' By the sons of God here, are doubtless meant the children of the church:

it is a denomination often given them in the scripture. They intermarried with the wicked world, and so their hearts were led away from God, and there was a great and continual defection: and the church of God which used to be a restraint on the wicked world, diminished exceedingly, and so wickedness went on uncontrolled. Satan, that old serpent, the devil, that tempted our first parents, and set up himself as god of this world, raged exceedingly; and every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually, and the earth was filled with violence. It seems to be deluged with wickedness now, as it was with water afterwards: and mankind in general were swallowed up in this deluge. And now Satan made a most violent and potent attempt to destroy the church of God, and had almost done it: but God restored it in the midst of all this flood of wickedness and violence. He kept it up in the line of which Christ was to proceed. He would not suffer it to be destroyed, for a blessing was in it. There was a particular family, a root whence 'the Branch of righteousness' was afterwards to shoot forth. And therefore, however the branches were lopped off, and the tree seemed to be destroyed; yet God, in the midst of all, kept alive this root, by his wonderful redeeming power and grace.

Thus I have shown how God carried on the great affair of redemption; how the building went on during the first period of the Old Testament, viz. from the fall of man, till God brought the flood upon the earth. And I would here remark, that though the history which Moses gives us of the great works of God during that space be very short; yet it is exceedingly comprehensive and instructive. And it may also be profitable to observe, the efficacy of that purchase of redemption which had such great effects, even many ages before Christ appeared to purchase redemption, by the shedding of his blood.

II. FROM THE FLOOD TO THE CALL OF ABRAHAM.

I PROCEED now to show how the same work was carried on through the second part of this period, from the beginning of the flood to the call of Abraham: for though that universal deluge of waters overthrew the world, yet it did not overthrow this building of God, the work of redemption. This went on still, and continued to be built up to a farther preparation for the great Saviour's coming into the world, and working out redemption for his people. And here observe,

I. The flood itself was a work of God that belonged to this great affair, and tended to promote it. All the great works of God, from the fall to the end of the world, rightly viewed, will appear as parts of this grand scheme, and as so many steps that God has taken in order to its being carried on; and doubtless so great a work, so remarkable a catastrophe, as the deluge was, cannot be excepted. It was wrought in order to remove out of the way, enemies that were ready to overthrow it.

Satan seems to have been in a dreadful rage just before the flood, and his rage then doubtless was, as it always has been, chiefly against the church of God. He had drawn almost all the world to be enlisted under his banner. We read that 'the earth was filled with violence;' and doubtless that violence was chiefly against the church, in fulfilment of what was foretold, 'I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed.' And their enmity and violence was so great, and the enemies of the church so numerous, the whole world being against it, that it was come to the last extremity. Noah's reproofs and his preaching of righteousness were utterly disregarded. God's Spirit had striven with them an hundred and twenty years, but in vain; the church was reduced to such narrow limits, as to be confined to one family. Neither was there a prospect of any thing else but of their totally swallowing it up in a

very little time; and so wholly destroying that small root that had the blessing in it, from whence the Redeemer was to proceed.

And therefore, God's destroying those enemies of the church by the flood, belongs to this affair of redemption: for it was one thing that was done in fulfilment of the covenant of grace, as it was revealed to Adam: 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head.' Thus was the seed of the serpent, in the midst of their most violent rage, disappointed, and the church delivered when in the utmost peril.

We read of scarce any great destruction of nations in the scripture, but one grand reason given for it is, their enmity and injuries against God's people; and doubtless this was one main reason of the destruction of all nations by the flood. The giants that were in those days, in all likelihood got themselves their renown by their great exploits against heaven, and the remaining sons of God that had not corrupted themselves.

We read that just before the world shall be destroyed by fire, 'the nations that are in the four quarters of the earth, shall gather together against the church as the sand of the sea, and shall go up on the breadth of the earth, and compass the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and then fire shall come down from God out of heaven, and devour them.' Rev. xx. 8, 9. And it seems there was that which was very parallel to it, just before the world was destroyed by water. And therefore their destruction was a work of God that did as much belong to the work of redemption, as the destruction of the Egyptians belonged to the redemption of the children of Israel out of Egypt; or as the destruction of Sennacherib's mighty army, that had compassed about Jerusalem to destroy it, belonged to God's redemption of that city from them.

By means of this flood, all the enemies of God's church, against whom that little handful had no

strength, were swept off at once.* God took their part, and appeared for them against their enemies, drowned those of whom they had been afraid in this flood, as he drowned the enemies of Israel that pursued them in the Red Sea.

Indeed God could have taken other methods to deliver his church : he could have converted all the world, instead of drowing it ; and so he could have taken another method than drowning the Egyptians in the Red Sea. But that is no argument, that the method that he did take, was not a method to show his redeeming mercy to his people.

By the deluge the enemies of God's people were dispossessed, and the whole earth given to Noah and his family to enjoy in quiet ; as God made room for the Israelites in Canaan, by casting out their enemies from before them. And God's thus taking the possession of the enemies of the church, and giving it all to his church, was agreeable to that promise of the covenant of grace ; Psal. xxxvii. 9, 10, 11. ' For evil doers shall be cut off ; but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while and the wicked shall not be ; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth,

* The enemies of the church all swept off at once by the flood. One hundred and twenty years had the divine patience waited---one hundred and twenty years had the holy prophet warned that perverse generation ; but in vain. Imagination is too weak to conceive, as well as language to paint, the awful event which follows---while

With black wings

Wide hovering, all the clouds together drove
From under heaven.

And now the thickened sky
Like a dark ceiling stood ; down rush'd the rain
Impetuous, and continued, till the earth
No more was seen ; the floating vessel swam
Uplifted, and secure with beaked prow,
Rode tilting o'er the waves ; all dwellings else
Flood overwhelm'd, and them, with all their pomp,
Deep under water roll'd ; sea covered sea,
Sea without shore ; and in their palaces,
Where luxury late reign'd, sea monsters whelp'd
And stabled ; of mankind, so numerous late,
All left, in one small bottom swam embark'd.

Par. Lost. Book xi.

and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.'

2. Another thing belonging to the same work, was God's so wonderfully preserving that family of which the Redeemer was to proceed, when all the rest of the world was drowned. God's drowing the world, and saving Noah and his family, were both reducible to this great work. The saving Noah and his family belonged to it two ways; as that was the family of which the Redeemer was to proceed, and as it was the church that he had redeemed. It was the mystical body of Christ that was there saved. The manner of God's saving those persons, when all the world besides was so overthrown, was very wonderful and remarkable. It was a wonderful and remarkable type of the redemption of Christ, of that redemption that is sealed by the baptism of water, and is so spoken of in the New Testament, as 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21. 'Which sometimes were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.' That water which washed away the filth of the world, and cleared the world of wicked men, was a type of the blood of Christ which takes away our sins. That water which delivered Noah and his sons from their enemies, is a type of the blood that delivers God's church from their spiritual enemies. That water which was so plentiful that it filled the world, and reached above the tops of the highest mountains, was a type of that blood, the efficacy of which is so abundant, that it is sufficient for the whole world; sufficient to bury the highest mountains of sin. The ark, that was the refuge and hiding-place of the church in this time of storm and flood, was a type of Christ, the true hiding-place of the church from the storms and floods of God's wrath.

3. The next thing observable is, the new grant of the earth made to Noah and his family immediately after the flood, as founded on the covenant of grace. The sacrifice of Christ was represented by Noah's building an altar to the Lord, and offering a sacrifice of every clean beast, and every clean fowl. And we have an account of God's accepting this sacrifice, and thereupon blessing Noah, and establishing his covenant with him, and with his seed, promising to destroy the earth in like manner no more; this signifying that, by the sacrifice of Christ, God's people are in safety from his destroying judgments, and obtain the blessing of the Lord. And God now, on occasion of this sacrifice that Noah offered, gives him and his posterity a new grant of the earth; a new power of dominion over the creatures, as founded on that sacrifice, and so on the covenant of grace. And thus it is to be looked upon as a distinct grant from that which was made to Adam, Gen. i. 28. 'And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.' Which grant was not founded on the covenant of grace; for it was given to Adam while he was under the covenant of works, and therefore was rendered void when that covenant ceased. The first grant of the earth to Adam was founded on the first covenant; and therefore, when that first covenant was broken, the right conveyed to him by it was forfeited and lost. Hence it came to pass, that the earth was taken away from mankind by the flood; for the first grant was forfeited; and God had never made another after that, till after the flood. If the first covenant had not been broken, God never would have drowned the world, and so have taken it away from mankind: for then the first grant would have stood good. But that being broken, God, after a while, destroyed the earth, when the wickedness of man was great upon it.

But after the flood, on Noah's offering a sacrifice that represented the sacrifice of Christ, God in smelling a sweet savour, or accepting that sacrifice (as it was a representation of the true sacrifice of Christ, which is a sweet savour indeed to God) gives Noah a new grant of the earth, founded thereon; or on that covenant of grace which is by the sacrifice of Christ, with a promise annexed, that now the earth should no more be destroyed, till the consummation of all things; as you may see in Gen. viii. 20—22, and chap. ix. 1—3, 7. The reason why such a promise was added to this grant made to Noah, and not to that made to Adam, was because this was founded on the covenant of grace, of which Christ was the surety, and therefore could not be broken. And therefore it comes to pass now, that though the wickedness of man has dreadfully raged, and the earth has been filled with violence and wickedness a thousand times, one age after another, and more dreadful and aggravated wickedness than the world was full of before the flood, being against so much greater light and mercy, especially in these days of the gospel; yet God's holds out; he does not destroy the earth; his mercy and forbearance abides according to his promise; and his grant established with Noah and his sons remains firm and good, being founded on the covenant of grace.

4. On this, God renews with Noah and his sons the covenant of grace, Gen. ix. 9, 10. 'And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you, and every living creature that is with you,' &c.; which even the brute creation have this benefit of, that it shall never be destroyed again until the consummation of all things. When we have this expression in scripture, 'my covenant,' it commonly is to be understood of the covenant of grace. The manner of expression, 'I will establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you,' shows plainly that it was a covenant already in being, that had been made, and that Noah would by

that denomination understand what covenant it was, even the covenant of grace.

5. God's disappointing the design of building the city and tower of Babel belongs also to this great work of redemption. For that was undertaken in opposition to this great building of God which we are speaking of. Men's going about to build such a city and tower was an effect of the corruption that mankind were now again fallen into. This city and tower was set up in opposition to the city of God, as the god that they built it to was their pride. Being sunk into a disposition to forsake the true God, the first idol they set up in his room, was themselves, their own glory and fame. And as this city and tower had its foundation laid in the pride and vanity of men; so it was built on a foundation exceedingly contrary to the nature of the foundation of the kingdom of Christ, and his redeemed city, which has its foundation laid in humility.

Therefore God saw that it tended to frustrate the design of that great building which was founded, not in the haughtiness of men; but in the purposes of God: thus the thing that they did displeased the Lord, and he confounded the design, not suffering them to bring it to perfection; as he will frustrate all other designs set up in opposition to the great building of the work of redemption.

In the second chapter of Isaiah, where the prophet is describing God's setting up the kingdom of Christ in the world, he foretels that he will, in order to it, bring down the haughtiness of men, and how the day of the Lord shall be on every high tower, and upon every fenced wall, &c. Christ's kingdom is established by bringing down every high thing to make way for it. 'For the weapons of our warfare are mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God.' What is done in a particular soul, to make way for the setting up of Christ's kingdom, is to destroy Babel in that soul.

They intended to have built Babel up to heaven. That building which is the subject we are now upon, is intended to be built so high, that its top shall reach to heaven indeed, as it will to the highest heavens at the end of the world, when it shall be finished: and therefore God would not suffer the building of his enemies, that they designed to build up to heaven in opposition to it, to prosper. If they had gone on and prospered in building that city and tower, it might have kept the world of wicked men, the enemies of the church together, as was their design. They might have remained united in one vast, powerful city, and so have been too powerful for the city of God, and quite swallowed it up.

This city of Babel is the same with the city of Babylon; for Babylon in the original is Babel: but Babylon was a city that is always spoken of in scripture as chiefly opposite to the city of God. Babylon and Jerusalem, or Zion, are often opposed to each other, both in the Old and New Testament. This city was a powerful and terrible enemy to the city of God afterwards, notwithstanding this great check put to the building of it in the beginning. But it might, and probably would have been vastly more powerful, and able to vex and destroy the church of God, if it had not been thus checked.

Thus it was in kindness to his church in the world, and in prosecution of the great design of redemption, that God put a stop to the building of the city and tower of Babel.

6. The dispersion of the nations, and dividing the earth among its inhabitants, immediately after God had caused the building of Babel to cease. This was done so as most to suit that great design of redemption; and particularly, God therein had an eye to the future propagation of the gospel among the nations. 'When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.' Deut. xxxii. 8. 'And hath made of one blood all nations of

men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him.' Acts xvii. 26, 27. The land of Canaan was the most conveniently situated of any place in the world for the purpose of spreading the light of the gospel thence among the nations in general. In the times immediately after Christ, the Roman empire included most of the known world, particularly the countries round about Jerusalem, which was therefore properly situated for the purpose of diffusing the light of the gospel among them from that place. The devil seeing the advantage of this situation of the nations for promoting the great work of redemption, and the disadvantage of it with respect to the interest of his kingdom, might perhaps lead away many into the remotest parts of the world, to get them out of the way of the gospel. Thus some were led into America; and others into cold northern regions, almost inaccessible.

7. Another thing I would mention in this period, was God's preserving the true religion in the line of which Christ was to proceed, when the world in general apostatized to idolatry, and the church was in imminent danger of being swallowed up in the general corruption. Although God had lately wrought so wonderfully for the deliverance of his church, and had shewed so great mercy towards it, as for its sake even to destroy all the rest of the world; and although he had lately renewed and established his covenant of grace with Noah and his sons; yet so prone is the corrupt heart of man to depart from God, and to sink into the depths of wickedness; and so prone to darkness, delusion and error, that the world soon after the flood fell into gross idolatry; so that before Abraham, the distemper was become almost universal. The earth was become very corrupt at the time of the building of Babel; and even God's people themselves, even that line of which Christ was to come, were corrupted in a

measure with idolatry. 'Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.' Josh. xxiv. 2. The other side of the flood means beyond the river Euphrates, where the ancestors of Abraham lived.

We are not to understand that they were wholly drawn off to idolatry, to forsake the true God. For God is said to be the God of Terah: Gen. xxxi. 53. 'The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us.' But they only partook in some measure of the general and almost universal corruption of the times; as Solomon was in a measure infected with idolatrous corruption; and as the children of Israel in Egypt are said to serve other gods, though yet there was the true church of God among them; and as there were images kept for a considerable time in the family of Jacob; the corruption being brought from Padan-aram, whence he fetched his wives.

This was the second time that the church was almost brought to nothing by the corruption and general defection of the world from true religion. But still the true religion was kept up in the family from which Christ was to proceed, which is another instance of God's remarkably preserving the church in the time of a general deluge of wickedness; and wherein, although the god of this world raged, and had almost swallowed up God's church, yet he did not suffer the gates of hell to prevail against it.



III. FROM THE CALL OF ABRAHAM TO MOSES.

I PROCEED now to show how the work of redemption was carried on through the third part of this period, beginning with the call of Abraham, and extending to Moses. And

1. It pleased God now to separate that person of whom Christ was to come, from the rest of the

world, that his church might be upheld in his family and posterity till that time. This he did in calling Abraham out of his own country, and from his kindred, to go into a distant one, that God should show him, and bringing him first out of Ur of the Chaldees to Haran, and then to the land of Canaan.

It was before observed, that the corruption of the world with idolatry was now become general; mankind were almost over-run with it; God therefore saw it necessary, in order to uphold true religion, that there should be a family separated from the rest of the world; for even Abraham's own country and kindred had most of them fallen, and, without some extraordinary interposition of Providence, in all likelihood, in a generation or two more, the true religion would have been extinct. And therefore God saw it to be a fit time to call Abraham, the person in whose family he intended to uphold religion, out of his own country, and from his kindred, to a far distant country, that his posterity might there remain a people separate from all the rest of the world; so that the true religion might be upheld there, while all mankind besides were swallowed up in heathenism.

The land of the Chaldees, that Abraham was called to go out of, was the country about Babel; Babel or Babylon, was the chief city of the land of Chaldea. Learned men suppose that it was in this land that idolatry first began; that Babel and Chaldea were the original and chief seat of the worship of idols, whence it spread into other nations. And therefore the land of the Chaldeans, or the country of Babylon, is in scripture called the land of graven images: as Jer. l. 35, 38. 'A sword is upon the Chaldeans, saith the Lord, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and upon her princes, and upon her wise men.---A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up; for it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols.' God calls Abraham out of this idolatrous country, to a great distance from it.

And when he came there, he gave him no inheritance in it, no not so much as to set his foot on ; but he remained a stranger and a sojourner, that he and his family might be kept separate from all the world.

This was a new thing : God had never taken such a method before. His church had not in this manner been separated from the rest of the world till now ; but were wont to dwell with them, without any bar or fence to keep them separate ; the mischievous consequences of which had been found repeatedly. The effect before the flood, of God's people living intermingled with the wicked world, without any remarkable wall of separation, was, that the sons of God joined in marriage with others, and thereby soon became infected, and the church was almost brought to nothing. The method that God then took was to drown the wicked world, and save the church in the ark. And now the world, before Abraham was called, was become corrupt again. But here God took another method. He did not destroy the world, and save Abraham, and his wife, and Lot in an ark ; but he calls these persons to go and live separate from the rest.

This was a new and a great thing, that God did toward the work of redemption. It was about the middle of the space of time between the fall of man and the coming of Christ ; about two thousand years before his incarnation. But by this calling of Abraham, the ancestor of Christ, a foundation was laid for the upholding the church in the world, till Christ should come. For the world having become idolatrous, there was a necessity that the seed of the woman should be thus separated from the idolatrous world in order thereunto.

It was also needful that there should be a particular nation separated from the rest of the world, to receive the types and prophecies that were to be given of Christ, to prepare the way for his coming ; that to them might be committed the oracles of God ; that by them the history of God's great

works of creation and providence might be preserved ; that so Christ might be born of this nation ; and from hence the light of the gospel shine forth to the rest of the world. These ends could not well be obtained, if God's people, through all these two thousand years, had lived intermixed with the heathen world. So that this calling of Abraham may be looked upon as a kind of a new foundation laid for the visible church of God, in a more distinct and regular state, to be built on this foundation from henceforward, till Christ should actually come, and then through him to be propagated to all nations. So that Abraham being the person in whom this foundation is laid, is represented in scripture as though he were the father of all the church, the father of all them that believe ; as it were a root whence the visible church rose as a tree distinct from all others ; of which tree Christ was the branch of righteousness ; and from which, after Christ came, the natural branches were broken off, and the Gentiles were grafted in. So that Abraham still remains, through Christ, the father of the church. It is the same tree which from that small beginning in Abraham's time, has in these days of the gospel spread its branches over a great part of the earth, and will fill the whole in due time, and at the end of the world be transplanted from an earthly soil into the Paradise of God.

2. There accompanied this a more particular and full revelation and confirmation of the covenant of grace than ever before had been. There were before this two particular and solemn editions or confirmations of this covenant ; one whereby it was revealed to our first parents, soon after the fall ; the other whereby God solemnly renewed the same covenant with Noah and his family soon after the flood ; and now a third, at the calling of Abraham, which being much nearer the time of the coming of Christ than either of the former, it was much more full and particular. It was now revealed, not only that Christ should come, but that he should be Abra-

ham's seed ; and that all the families of the earth should be blessed in him. God repeatedly promised this to Abraham. First, when he first called him, Gen. xii. 2. 'And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great : and thou shalt be a blessing.' The same promise was renewed after he came into the land of Canaan, chap. xiii. 14, &c. Again after Abraham returned from the slaughter of the kings, chap. xv. 5, 6. And a fourth time, after his offering up Isaac, chap. xxii. 16---18.

In this renewal of the covenant of grace with Abraham, several particulars concerning it were revealed more fully than before ; not only that Christ was to be of Abraham's seed, but also, the calling of the Gentiles, and the bringing all nations into the church, that all the families of the earth might be blessed, was now made known. And the great condition of the covenant of grace, which is faith, was now more fully revealed. Gen. xv. 5, 6. 'And he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.' Which is much taken notice of in the New Testament, and from thence Abraham was called 'the father of them that believe.' Rom. iv. 2---11.

And as there was now a farther revelation of the covenant of grace, so there was a farther confirmation of it by seals and pledges, than ever had been before ; as, particularly, God did now institute a certain sacrament, to be a standing seal of this covenant in the visible church, till Christ should come, viz. circumcision. Circumcision was a seal of this covenant of grace, as appears by its first institution, in the xviiith chapter of Genesis. It there appears to be a seal of that covenant by which God promised to make Abraham a father of many nations : compare the 5th with the 9th and 10th verses. And we are expressly taught, that it was a seal of the righteousness of faith, Rom. iv. 11. Speaking of Abraham, the apostle says, 'He re-

ceived the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith.' And the sacrament chiefly distinguished Abraham's seed from the world, and kept up a separation between them more than any other particular observance whatever.

Besides this, there were other occasional seals, and confirmations, that Abraham had of this covenant; as particularly, (1) God gave Abraham a remarkable pledge of the fulfilment of the promise he had made him, in his victory over Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him. Chedorlaomer seems to have reigned over a great part of the world at that day; and though he had his seat at Elam, which was not much if any thing short of a thousand miles from the land of Canaan, yet he extended his empire so as to reign over many parts of that land, as appears by Gen. xiv. 4---7. It is supposed by learned men, that he was a king of the Assyrian empire, which had been begun by Nimrod at Babel. And as it was the honour of kings in those days to build new cities to be made the seats of empire, chap x. 10---12, so it is conjectured, that he had built him a city in Elam, and made that his seat; and that the other kings, who came with him, were his deputies in the several cities and countries where they reigned. But yet as mighty an empire as he had, and as great an army as he now came with, Abraham, only with his trained servants that were born in his own house, conquered and subdued them all. This victory he received of God as a pledge of the victory that Christ, his seed, should obtain over the nations of the earth, whereby he should possess the gates of his enemies. It is plainly spoken of as such in Isaiah. In chap. xli. is foretold the future glorious victory the church shall obtain over the nations of the world; as you may see in verses, 1, 10, 15, &c. But in verses 2, 3, this victory of Abraham is spoken of as a pledge and earnest of the victory of the church. 'Who raised up the righteous man from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings? He gave

them as the dust to the sword, and as driven stubble to his bow. He pursued them, and passed safely; even by the way that he had not gone with his feet.'

(2) Another remarkable confirmation Abraham received of the covenant of grace, was when he returned from the slaughter of the kings; when Melchizedek the king of Salem, the priest of the most high God, that great type of Christ, met him, and blessed him, and brought forth bread and wine. The bread and wine signified the same blessings of the covenant of grace, that the bread and wine does in the sacrament of the Lord's supper. So that as Abraham had a seal of the covenant in circumcision, that was equivalent to the Lord's supper. And Melchizedek's coming to meet him with such a seal of the covenant of grace, on the occasion of this victory, evinces that it was a pledge of God's fulfilment of the same covenant; for that is the mercy which Melchizedek takes notice of. Gen. xiv. 19, 20.

(3) Another was, the vision that he had in the deep sleep that fell upon Abraham, of the smoking furnace, and burning lamp, that passed between the parts of the sacrifice. Gen. xv. That sacrifice, as all sacrifices do, signified the sacrifice of Christ. The smoking furnace that passed through the midst of that sacrifice signified the sufferings of Christ; but the burning lamp that followed, which shone with a clear bright light, signifies the glory that followed Christ's sufferings, and was procured by them.

(4) Another pledge that God gave Abraham of the fulfilment of the covenant of grace, was his gift of that child of whom Christ was to come, in his old age. This is spoken of as such in scripture. Heb. xi. 11, 12, and also Rom. iv. 18, &c.

(5) Again, in his delivering Isaac, after he was laid upon the wood of the sacrifice to be slain. God gave Abraham another confirmation of his faith in the promise that God had made of Christ, that he should be of Isaac's posterity; and was a repre-

sentation of the resurrection of Christ. Heb. xi. 17---19. And because this was given as a confirmation of the covenant of grace, therefore God renewed that covenant with Abraham on this occasion. Gen. xxiv. 15, &c.

Thus you see how much more fully the covenant of grace was revealed and confirmed in Abraham's time than it had been before; by means of which Abraham seems to have had a clearer understanding and sight of Christ, the great Redeemer, and the future things that were to be accomplished by him, than any of the saints preceding him; and therefore Christ informs us, that 'Abraham rejoiced to see his day, and he saw it, and was glad.' John viii. 56. So great an advance did it please God now to make in this building, which he had been carrying on from the beginning of the world.

3. The next thing that I would take notice of here, is God's preserving the patriarchs so long in the midst of the wicked inhabitants of Canaan, and from all other enemies. The patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were those of whom Christ was to proceed; and they were now separated from the world, that in them the church might be upheld: therefore, in preserving them, the great design of redemption was carried on. He preserved them, and kept the inhabitants of the land where they sojourned from destroying them; which was a remarkable dispensation of Providence: for the inhabitants of the land were at that day exceedingly wicked, though they grew more wicked afterwards. This appears by Gen. xv. 16. 'In the fourth generation they shall come hither again; for the iniquity of the Canaanites is not yet full:' as much as to say, Though it be very great, it is not yet full. And their great wickedness also appears by Abraham and Isaac's aversion to their children marrying any of the daughters of the land. Abraham, when he was old, could not be content till he had made his servant swear that he would not take a wife for

his son of the daughters of the land. And Isaac and Rebecca were content to send away Jacob to so great a distance as Padan-aram, to take him a wife thence. And when Esau married some of the daughters of the land, we are told, that they were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebecca. Gen. xxvi. 35.

Another argument of their great wickedness, was the instances we have in Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, which were some of the cities of Canaan, though they were probably more eminently wicked.

And they being thus wicked, were likely to have the most bitter enmity against these holy men; agreeable to what was declared at first, 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed.' Their holy lives were a continual condemnation of their wickedness. And besides, it could not be otherwise, but that they must be much in reproving their wickedness, as we find Lot was in Sodom; who, we are told, vexed his righteous soul with their unlawful deeds, and was a preacher of righteousness to them.

And they were the more exposed to them, being strangers and sojourners in the land, and having no inheritance there as yet. Men are more apt to find fault with strangers, and to be irritated by any thing in them, as they were with Lot in Sodom. He very gently reproved their wickedness; and they say upon it, 'This fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a ruler and a judge;' and threatened what they would do to him.

But God wonderfully preserved Abraham and Lot, and Isaac and Jacob, and their families, amongst them, though they were few in number, and they might quickly have destroyed them; which is taken notice of as a wonderful instance of God's preserving mercy toward his church. Psal. cv. 12, &c. 'When they were but a few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it. When they went from one na-

tion to another, from one kingdom to another people; he suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reprov'd kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.'

This preservation was in some instances very remarkable; those instances that we have an account of, wherein the people of the land were greatly irritated and provok'd; as they were by Simeon and Levi's treatment of the Shechemites. Gen. xxxiv. 30, &c. God then strangely preserved Jacob and his family, restraining the provok'd people by an unusual terror on their minds. Gen. xxxv. 5. 'And the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.'

And God's preserving them, not only from the Canaanites, is here to be taken notice of, but his preserving them from all others that intended mischief to them: thus his preserving Jacob and his company, when pursued by Laban full of rage, and a disposition to overtake him as an enemy; God met him, and rebuked him, and said to him, 'Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.' Gen. xxxi. 24. How wonderfully did he also preserve him from Esau his brother, when he came forth with an army, with a full design to cut him off! How did God in answer to his prayer, when he wrestled with Christ at Penuel, wonderfully turn Esau's heart, and make him, instead of meeting him as an enemy, with slaughter and destruction, to meet him as a friend and brother, doing him no harm! Thus were this handful, this little root that had the blessing of the Redeemer in it, preserved in the midst of enemies and dangers; which was not unlike to the preserving the ark in the midst of the tempestuous deluge.

4. The next thing I would mention, is the awful destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbouring cities. This tended to promote the great design and work that is the subject of my present undertaking, two ways. It did so, as it tended

powerfully to restrain the inhabitants of the land from injuring those holy strangers that God had brought to sojourn amongst them. Lot was one of those strangers; he came into the land with Abraham; and Sodom was destroyed through their disregard of Lot, the preacher of righteousness, whom God had sent among them. And their destruction came just upon their committing a most injurious and abominable insult on Lot, and the strangers that were come into his house, even those angels, whom they probably took to be some of Lot's former acquaintance, come from his own country to visit him. They in a most outrageous manner beset Lot's house, intending a monstrous abuse of those strangers that were come thither, and threatening to serve Lot worse than them.

But in the midst of this God smote them with blindness, and the next morning the city and the country about it was overthrown in a most terrible storm of fire and brimstone; which dreadful destruction, as it was in the sight of the rest of the inhabitants of the land, and therefore greatly tended to restrain them from hurting those holy strangers any more; it doubtless struck a dread and terror on their minds, and made them afraid to hurt them, and probably was one principal means to restrain them, and preserve the patriarchs. And when that reason is given why the inhabitants of the land did not pursue after Jacob, when they were so provoked by the destruction of the Schechemites, viz. 'that the terror of the Lord was upon them,' it is very probable that this was the terror referred to. They remembered the amazing destruction of Sodom, and the cities of the plain, that came upon them, upon their abusive treatment of Lot, and so durst not hurt Jacob and his family, though they were so much provoked to it.

Another way that this awful destruction tended to promote this great affair of redemption, was, that hereby God did remarkably exhibit the terrors of his law, to make men sensible of their need of re-

deeming mercy. The work of redemption never was carried on without this. The law, from the beginning, is made use of as a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ. Gal. iii. 24.

But under the Old Testament there was much more need of some extraordinary, visible, and sensible manifestation of God's wrath against sin, than in the days of the gospel; since a future state, and the eternal misery of hell, is more clearly revealed, and since the awful justice of God against the sins of men has been so wonderfully displayed in the sufferings of Christ. And therefore the revelation that God gave of himself in those days, used to be accompanied with much more terror than it is in these of the gospel. So when God appeared at Mount Sinai to give the law, it was with thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud. But some external, awful manifestations of God's wrath against sin were on some accounts especially necessary before the giving of the law: and therefore, before the flood, the terrors of the law handed down by tradition from Adam served. Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years himself, to tell the church of God's awful threatenings denounced in the covenant made with him, and how dreadful the consequences of the fall were, of which he was an eye-witness and subject; and others that conversed with Adam, lived till the flood. And the destruction of the world by the flood served to exhibit the terrors of the law, and manifest the wrath of God against sin; and so to make men sensible of the absolute necessity of redeeming mercy. And some that saw the flood were alive in Abraham's time.

But this was now in a great measure forgotten; now therefore God was pleased again, in a most amazing manner, to show his wrath against sin, in the destruction of these cities; which was after such a manner as to be the liveliest image of hell of any thing that ever had been; and therefore the apostle Jude says, 'They suffer the vengeance of

eternal fire.' Jude 7. God rained storms of fire and brimstone upon them. The way that they were destroyed probably was by thick flashes of lightning. The streams of brimstone were so thick as to burn up all these cities ; so that they perished in the flames. By this might be seen the dreadful wrath of God against the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men ; which tended to show men the necessity of redemption, and so to promote that great work.

5. God again renewed and confirmed the covenant of grace to Isaac and to Jacob. He did so to Isaac, Gen. xxvi. 3, 4. 'And I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father ; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries ; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.' And afterwards it was renewed and confirmed to Jacob ; first, in Isaac's blessing of him, wherein he acted and spoke by extraordinary and divine direction. In that blessing the blessings of the covenant of grace were established with Jacob and his seed ; as Gen. xxvii. 29. 'Let people serve thee ; and nations bow down to thee ; be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee : Cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.' And therefore Esau, in missing of this blessing, missed of being blessed as an heir of the benefits of the covenant of grace.

This covenant was again renewed and confirmed to Jacob at Bethel, by his vision of the ladder that reached to heaven ; which ladder was a symbol of the way of salvation by Christ. For the stone that Jacob rested on was a type of Christ, the stone of Israel, which the spiritual Israel or Jacob rests upon ; as is evident, because this stone was, on this occasion, anointed, and was made use of as an altar. But we know that Christ is the anointed of God, and is the only true altar. While Jacob was resting on this stone, and saw this ladder, God appears to him as his covenant God, and renews the covenant

of grace with him. Gen. xxviii. 14. 'And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee, and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed.'

Jacob had another remarkable confirmation of this covenant at Penuel, where he wrestled with God, and prevailed; where Christ appeared to him in a human form; in the form of that nature which he was afterwards to receive into a personal union with his divine nature.

God renewed his covenant with him again, after he was come out of Padan-aram, and was come up to Bethel, and to the stone that he had rested on; and where he had the vision of the ladder. Gen. xxxv. Thus the covenant of grace was now often renewed, much oftener than it had been before. The light of the gospel now began to shine much brighter, as the time drew nearer that Christ should come.

6. The next thing I would observe, is God's remarkably preserving the family of which Christ was to proceed from perishing by famine, by the instrumentality of Joseph. When there was a seven-years famine approaching, God was pleased by a wonderful providence, to send Joseph into Egypt, there to provide for, and feed Jacob and his family, and to keep the holy seed alive, which otherwise would have perished. Joseph was sent into Egypt for that end, as he observes, Gen. i. 20. 'But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to save much people alive.' How often had this holy root, that had the future Branch of righteousness, the glorious Redeemer in it, been in danger of being destroyed! But God wonderfully preserved it.

This salvation of the house of Israel by the hand of Joseph, was upon some accounts very much a resemblance of the salvation of Christ. The children of Israel were saved by Joseph their kinsman and brother, from perishing by famine; so He that saves

the souls of the spiritual Israel from spiritual famine is their near kinsman, and one that is not ashamed to call them brethren. Joseph was a brother whom they had hated, and sold, and as it were killed; for they had designed to kill him. So Christ is one that we naturally hate, and by our wicked lives have sold for the vain things of the world, and whom we have slain by our sins. Joseph was first in a state of humiliation; he was a servant, as Christ appeared in the form of a servant; and then was cast into a dungeon, as Christ descended into the grave; and then when he rose out of the dungeon, he was in a state of great exaltation, at the king's right hand as his deputy, to reign over all his kingdom, to provide food, to preserve life; as Christ was exalted at God's right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour to his brethren, and received gifts for men, even for the rebellious, and them that hated and had sold him.

7. After this there was a prophecy given forth of Christ, on some accounts, more particular than ever any had been before, even that which was in Jacob's blessing his son Judah: this was more particular in showing of whose posterity he was to be. When God called Abraham, it was revealed that he was to be of Abraham's posterity. Before, we have no account of any revelation concerning Christ's pedigree confined to narrower limits than the posterity of Noah: after this it was confined to limits still more narrow; for though Abraham had many sons, yet it was revealed that Christ was to be of Isaac's posterity. And then it was limited more still: for when Isaac had two sons, it was revealed that Christ was to be of Israel's posterity. And now, though Israel had twelve sons, yet it is revealed that Christ was to be of Judah's posterity: Christ is 'the lion of the tribe of Judah.' Respect is chiefly had to his great acts, when it is said, Gen. xlix. 8, 9; 'Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies: thy father's children shall bow down be-

fore thee. Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?' This prediction is afterwards more particular concerning the time of Christ's coming, verse 10. 'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.' The prophecy here, of the calling of the Gentiles consequent on Christ's coming, seems to be more plain than had yet been, in the expression, 'to him shall the gathering of the people be.' Thus you see how that gospel-light which dawned immediately after the fall of man was gradually increased.

8. The work of redemption was carried on in this period, in God's wonderfully preserving the children of Israel in Egypt, when the power of Egypt was engaged utterly to destroy them. They seemed to be wholly in the hands of the Egyptians; they were their servants, and were subject to the power of Pharaoh, who set himself to weaken them by hard bondage. And when he saw that did not do, he set himself to extirpate the race of them, by commanding that every male child should be drowned. But after all that Pharaoh could do, God wonderfully preserved them; and not only so, but increased them exceedingly; so that instead of being extirpated, they greatly multiplied.

9. Here is to be observed, not only the preservation of the nation, but God's wonderfully preserving and upholding his invisible church in that nation, when in danger of being overwhelmed in the idolatry of Egypt. The children of Israel being long among the Egyptians, and being servants under them, and so not having the advantage of keeping God's ordinances among themselves, or maintaining any public worship or instruction, whereby the true religion might be upheld; and there being now no written word of God, they, by degrees, in a great measure lost the true religion, and borrowed the

idolatry of Egypt; and the greater part of the people fell away to the worship of their gods. See Ezek. xx, 6, 8. xxiii. 8.

This now was the third time that God's church was almost swallowed up and carried away with the wickedness of the world; once before the flood; a second time before the calling of Abraham; and now, in Egypt. But yet God did not suffer his church to be quite overwhelmed; he still saved it, like the ark in the flood, and as he saved Moses in the midst of the waters, in an ark of bulrushes, where he was in the utmost danger of being swallowed up. The true religion was still kept up with some; and God had still a people among them, even in this miserable, corrupt and dark time. The parents of Moses were true servants of God, Heb. xi. 23. 'By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw that he was a proper child, and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.'

I have now gone through the third part of the Old Testament period; and have shown how the work of redemption was carried on from the calling of Abraham to Moses; in which we have seen many great things done towards this work, and a great advancement of this building, beyond what had been before.



IV. FROM MOSES TO DAVID.

I PROCEED to the fourth period, which reaches from Moses to David, to show how the work of redemption was carried on through this also.

The first thing that offers itself to be considered is the redemption of the church of God out of Egypt; the most remarkable of all the Old Testament deliverances, and that which was the greatest pledge and type of the future redemption of Christ; and is much more insisted on in scripture than any

other. This was by Jesus Christ, who appeared to Moses in the bush; sent him to redeem that people, as is evident, because he is called the angel of the Lord. *Exod. iii. 2, 3.* The bush represented the human nature of Christ, who is called the Branch. This bush grew on mount Sinai or Horeb,* which last name signifies a dry place, as the human nature of Christ was 'a root out of dry ground.' The bush burning with fire, represented the sufferings of Christ, in the fire of God's wrath. It burned, and was not consumed; so Christ, though he suffered extremely, yet perished not; but overcame at last, and rose from his sufferings. Because this great mystery of the incarnation and sufferings of Christ was here represented, therefore Moses says, 'I will turn aside, and behold this great sight.' A great sight he might well call it, when there was represented, God manifest in the flesh, suffering a dreadful death, and rising from the dead.

It was this glorious person that redeemed Israel out of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh; as afterward, by his death and sufferings, he redeemed his elect from Satan, the spiritual Pharaoh. Those he delivered from hard service and cruel drudgery; these from the cruel slavery of sin and Satan. Those he redeemed from the iron furnace; these from everlasting burnings. Those he redeemed with a strong hand and outstretched arm, and great and terrible judgments on their enemies; these with mighty grace triumphing over principalities, and powers, and executing terrible judgments on their enemies. Those he saved when others were destroyed, by the sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb; these from death and hell by the sprinkling of his own blood. Those he brought forth sorely against the will of the Egyptians, when they could not bear to let them go; these he rescues out of the

* Horeb is a mountain in Arabia Petraea, at so small a distance from mount Sinai, that they seem to be no more than two tops belonging to the same mountain. Sinai lies to the east, and Horeb to the west; they are frequently mentioned in scripture promiscuously.

hands of the devil, when his proud heart cannot bear to be overcome.

In that redemption, Christ did not only deliver the people from the Egyptians, but he redeemed them from the demons, their gods; for before, they had been in a state of servitude to the gods of Egypt, as well as to the Egyptians. And Christ, the seed of the woman, did now, in a very remarkable manner, fulfil the curse on the serpent, in bruising his head. Exod. xii. 12. 'For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast, and against all the gods of Egypt will I execute judgment.' Hell was as much, and more, engaged in that affair, than Egypt itself. The pride and cruelty of Satan, that old serpent, was more concerned in it than Pharaoh's. He did his worst against the people, and to his utmost opposed their redemption. But it is said that when God redeemed his people out of Egypt, he broke the heads of the dragons in the waters, and broke the head of leviathan in pieces, and gave him to be meat for the people inhabiting the wilderness. Psal. lxxiv. 12---14. God forced their enemies to let them go, that they might serve him; as also Zacharias observes with respect to the church under the gospel. Luke i. 74, 75.

The people of Israel went out with a high hand, and Christ went before them, in a pillar of cloud and fire. There was a glorious triumph over earth and hell in that deliverance. And when Pharaoh and his host, and Satan by them, pursued the people, Christ overthrew them in the Red Sea. 'The Lord triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he cast into the sea,' and there they slept their last sleep, and never followed the children of Israel any more; as all Christ's enemies are overthrown in his blood, which by its abundant sufficiency, and the greatness of the sufferings with which it was shed, may well be represented by a sea. The Red Sea might represent Christ's blood, as is evident, be-

cause the apostle compares the children of Israel's passage through it, to baptism; and we know that the water of baptism represents the blood of Christ. 1 Cor. x. 1, 2. Thus Christ, the angel of God's presence, in his love and in his pity, redeemed his people, and carried them in the days of old as on eagle's wings, so that none of their proud and malicious enemies could touch them.

This was another new thing that God did towards this great work of redemption. God never had done any thing like it before. Deut. iv. 32---34. This was the greatest advancement of the work of redemption, that had been begun and carried on from the fall of man; a great step taken in divine providence towards a preparation for Christ's coming into the world, and working out his great and eternal redemption: for this was the people of whom Christ was to come. And now we may see how that plant flourished that God had planted in Abraham. Though the family of which Christ was to come, had been in a degree separated from the rest of the world before, in the calling of Abraham, yet that separation appeared not to be sufficient. For though by that they were kept as strangers and sojourners, and from being united with other people in the same political societies; yet they remained mixed among them, by which means, as it had proved, they were in danger of wholly losing the true religion, and of being overrun with the idolatry of their neighbours. God now, therefore, by this redemption, separated them as a nation from all other nations, to subsist by themselves in their own political and ecclesiastical state, without having any concern with the heathen nations, that they might so be kept separate till Christ should come; and so that the church of Christ might be upheld, and might keep the oracles of God, till that time; that in them might be exhibited those types and prophecies of Christ, and those histories, and other divine instructions, that were necessary to prepare the way for Christ's coming.

2. As this people were separated to be God's peculiar people, so all other people upon the face of the whole earth were wholly rejected and given over to heathenism. This, so far as the providence of God was concerned in it, belongs to the great affair we are now upon, and was one thing that God ordered in his providence to prepare the way for Christ's coming, and the great salvation he was to accomplish: it was to prepare the way for the more glorious and signal victory and triumph of Christ's power and grace over the wicked and miserable world, and that Christ's salvation of the world of mankind might become the more sensible. This is the account the scripture itself gives us of the matter, Rom. xi. 30—32. The apostle there speaking to the Gentiles that had formerly been heathens, says, 'As ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they may also obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.' That is, it was the will of God, that the whole world, Jews and Gentiles, should be concluded in visible and professed unbelief, that so God's mercy and Christ's salvation towards them all might be visible and sensible. For the apostle is not speaking only of that unbelief which is natural to all God's professing people as well as others, but of that which is apparent and visible; such as the Jews fell into, when they openly rejected Christ. The apostle observes, how that first the Gentile nations were included in a professed unbelief and open opposition to the true religion, before Christ came, to prepare the way for the calling of the Gentiles, which was soon after, that God's mercy might be the more conspicuous to them; and that the Jews were rejected from the visible church, to prepare the way for the calling of the Jews, which shall be in the latter days: so that it may be seen of all nations, Jews and Gentiles, that they are evidently redeemed by

Christ, from their being visibly aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, without hope, and without God in the world.

We cannot with certainty precisely determine at what time the apostasy of the Gentile nations became universal. It was a gradual thing, as we have already observed. It was general in Abraham's time, but not universal: for then we find Melchizedek, one of the kings of Canaan, was priest of the most high God. And after this the true religion was kept up for a while among some of the rest of Abraham's posterity, besides the family of Jacob, and also in some of the posterity of Nahor, of which we have instances in Job, his three friends and Elihu. The land of Uz, where Job lived, was a land possessed by the posterity of Uz, or Huz the son of Nahor, Abraham's brother, of whom we read, Gen. xxii. 21. Bildad the Shuhite was of the offspring of Shuah, Abraham's son by Keturah, Gen. xxv. 1, 2; and Elihu the Buzite, was of Buz, the son of Nahor, the brother of Abraham. So the true religion lasted among some other people, besides the Israelites, some time after Abraham, but not long: and it is probable that the time of their rejection, and being given up to idolatry, was about the time when God separated the children of Israel from Egypt to serve him; for they are often put in mind on that occasion, that God had now separated them to be his peculiar people; or to be distinguished from all other people upon earth, to be his people alone; to be his portion, when others were rejected. This seems to imply that God now chose them in such a manner, that his visible choice of them was accompanied with a visible rejection of all other nations in the world; that God came, and took up his residence with them, as it were, forsaking all other nations. And as the first calling of the Gentiles after Christ came, was accompanied with a rejection of the Jews; so the first calling of the Jews to be God's people, when they were called out of Egypt, was accompanied with a rejection of the Gentiles.

Thus all the nations throughout the whole world, except the Israelites, and those that embodied themselves with them, were left to idolatry; and so continued a great many ages, even from this time till Christ came, which was about fifteen hundred years. They were concluded so long a time in unbelief, that they might be a thorough proof of the necessity of a Saviour; that it might evidently appear by so long a trial, that mankind were utterly insufficient to deliver themselves from that gross darkness and misery, and subjection to the devil, that they had fallen under; that it might appear that all the wisdom of the philosophers, and the sages that the heathen had among them, could not deliver them from their darkness, for the greater glory to Jesus Christ, who when he came, enlightened and delivered them by his glorious gospel. Herein the wonderful wisdom of God appeared, in thus preparing the way for Christ's redemption. This the scripture teaches us, as in 1 Cor. i. 21. 'For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.'

3. The next thing done towards the work of redemption is God's giving the moral law in so awful a manner at Mount Sinai. This was another new thing that God did, a new step taken in this great affair, Deut. iv. 33. 'Did ever a people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?' And it was a great thing, whether we consider it as a new exhibition of the covenant of works, or given as a rule of life.

The covenant of works was here exhibited to be as a schoolmaster to lead to Christ, not only for the use of that nation in the ages of the Old Testament, but for the use of God's church throughout all ages of the world, as an instrument that the great Redeemer makes use of to convince men of their sin and misery, and helpless state, and of God's awful and tremendous majesty and justice as a lawgiver, and to make men sensible of the necessity of Christ

as a Saviour. The work of redemption, in its saving effect on men's souls, in all the progress of it, is not carried on without the use of this law.

It was given in an awful manner, with a terrible voice, so exceedingly loud, that all the people which were in the camp trembled; and Moses himself, though so intimate a friend of God, yet said, 'I exceedingly fear and quake.' Heb. xii. 21. The voice being accompanied with thunders and lightnings, the mountain burning with fire, and the earth shaking and trembling, was to make all sensible how great that authority, power, and justice was, that stood engaged to exact the fulfilment of this law, and how terrible his wrath will be against every breaker of it; that men, being sensible of these things, might have a thorough trial of themselves; prove their own hearts; know how impossible it is for them to have salvation by the works of the law, and see the absolute necessity they stood in of a mediator.

If we regard this law, not as the covenant of works, but as a rule of life; so it is made use of by the Redeemer, from that time to the end of the world, as a directory to his people, to shew them the way in which they must walk, if they would go to heaven: for a way of sincere and universal obedience to this law is the narrow way that leads to life.

4. The next thing observable in this period, was God's giving the typical law, in which I suppose to be included most of those precepts which were given by Moses, that did not properly belong to the moral: not only those laws that are commonly called ceremonial, which are the laws prescribing the ceremonies and circumstances of the Jewish worship, and their ecclesiastical state; but also many, if not all those divine laws that were political, and for regulating the Jewish commonwealth, commonly called judicial; these were many of them typical. The giving this typical law was another great thing that God did in this period, tending to

build up this glorious structure of redemption that he had been carrying on from the beginning of the world. There had been many typical events of providence before, that represented Christ and his redemption; and some typical ordinances, as particularly those two of sacrifices and circumcision: but now, instead of representing the great Redeemer in a few institutions, God gives forth a law full of nothing else but various and innumerable typical representations of good things to come, by which that nation was directed how, every year, month, and day, in their religious actions, and in their conduct of themselves, in all that appertained to their ecclesiastical and civil state, to show forth something of Christ; one observance showing one thing, exhibiting one doctrine, or one benefit; another, another; so that the whole nation by this law was, as it were, constituted in a typical state. Thus the gospel was abundantly held forth to that nation; so that there is scarce any doctrine of it, but is particularly taught and exhibited by some observance of this law; though it was in shadows, and under a vail, as Moses put a vail on his face when it shone.

To this typical law belong all the precepts that relate to building the tabernacle, which was set up in the wilderness, and all the form, circumstances, and utensils of it.

5. About this time was given to the church the first written word of God for the regulation of the faith, worship, and practice of his church in all ages, which was increased from time to time till it was finished, and the canon of scripture completed, by the apostle John. It is not very material whether the first written word, was the ten commandments written on the tables of stone with the finger of God, or the book of Job; nor whether the book of Job was written by Moses, as some suppose, or by Elihu, as others. If it was written by Elihu, it was written before this period; but yet could not be far from it, as appears by considering whose posterity the persons were that are spoken of in it, together

with Job's great age, which was past before this was written.

The written word of God is the main instrument Christ has made use of to carry on this work of redemption in all ages since it was given. There was a necessity now for the word of God being committed to writing as a standing rule to his church. Before this, the church had the word of God by tradition, either immediately from eminent men that were inspired, who were then living, or else by tradition from former generations, which might be had with tolerable certainty in ages preceding this, by reason of the long lives of men. Noah might converse with Adam, and receive traditions from him; and Noah lived till about Abraham's time: and the sons of Jacob lived a considerable time to deliver the revelations made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to their posterity in Egypt. But the distance from the beginning was now become so great, and the lives of men so shortened, (being brought down to the present standard about Moses's time,) that God having now separated a nation to be a peculiar people, partly for that end to be the keepers of his oracles, saw it to be a needful and convenient time now to commit his word to writing, to remain throughout all ages. And therefore, besides the book of Job, God wrote the ten commandments on tables of stone, with his own finger; and after this the whole law, as containing the substance of the five books of Moses, was by his special command committed to writing, which was called the book of the law, and was laid up in the tabernacle, to be kept there for the use of the church. Deut. xxxi. 24---26.

6. God was pleased now wonderfully to represent the progress of his redeemed church through the world to their eternal inheritance, by the journey of the children of Israel through the wilderness, from Egypt to Canaan. Here all the various steps of the redemption of the church by Christ were represented, from the beginning to its consummation in

glory.---The state they are redeemed from is represented by Egypt, and their bondage there, which they left.---The purchase of their redemption was represented by the sacrifice of the paschal lamb, which was offered up the night that God slew all the firstborn of Egypt.---The beginning of the application of the redemption of Christ's church in their conversion was represented by Israel's going out of Egypt, and passing through the Red Sea in so extraordinary and miraculous a manner.---The travel of the church through this evil world, and the various changes through which the church passes, in the different stages of it, was represented by the journey of the Israelites through the wilderness.---The manner of their being conducted by Christ, was represented by the Israelites being led by the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night.---The manner of the church's being supported in their progress, and supplied from the beginning to the end of it with spiritual food, and continual daily communications from God, was represented by God's supplying the children of Israel with bread or manna from heaven, and water out of the rock.---The dangers that the saints must meet with in their course through the world, were represented by the fiery flying serpents which the children of Israel met with in the wilderness.---The conflicts the church has with her enemies were represented by their battle with the Amalekites, and others they met there. Innumerable other instances might be mentioned, wherein the things they met with were lively images of things which the church and saints meet with in all ages of the world. That these were typical of what pertains to the Christian church, is manifest from I Cor. x. 11. 'Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.' Here the apostle is speaking of those very things which we have now considered, and he says expressly, that they happened unto them for types ; so it is in the original.

7. Another thing must not be omitted, which was a great and remarkable dispensation of providence, viz. the shortening the days of man's life, whereby it was brought down from being between nine hundred and a thousand years, to but about seventy or eighty. The life of man began to be shortened immediately after the flood: it was brought down the first generation to six hundred years, and the next to between four and five hundred years; and so the life of man gradually grew shorter and shorter, till about the time of the great mortality that was in the congregation of Israel, after they had murmured at the report of the spies, and their carcasses fell in the wilderness, whereby all the men of war died: and then the life of man was reduced to its present standard, as Moses observes in that psalm that he wrote on occasion of that mortality. Psal. xc. 10. 'The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow: for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.'

This great dispensation of God tended to promote the grand design of the redemption of Christ. Man's life being cut so very short in this world, prepared the way for poor, mortal, short-lived men, the more joyfully to entertain the glad tidings of everlasting life in another world, and more readily to embrace a Saviour, who purchases and offers such a blessing. If men's lives were still commonly about nine hundred years, how much less would they have to move them to regard the proffers of a future life; how much greater temptations would they have to rest in the things of this world, they being of such long continuance, and to neglect any other life but this? This probably contributed greatly to the wickedness of the antediluvians. But now how much greater motives have men to seek redemption, and a better life than this, by the great Redeemer, since the life of man is not one twelfth part of what it used to be, and men now universally die at the age when men

formerly used to be but, as it were, setting out in the world ?

8. The same work was carried on in preserving that people, of whom Christ was to come, from totally perishing in the wilderness, by a constant miracle of forty years continuance. I observed before many times, how God preserved those of whom the Redeemer was to proceed in a very wonderful manner ; but this preservation of the children of Israel for so long a time in the wilderness was, on some accounts, more remarkable than any of them. There was, as may be fairly computed, at first two millions of souls in that congregation, which must have perished in less than one month's time, had they not been miraculously supplied. But yet this vast multitude subsisted for forty years together, in a dry barren wilderness, without sowing or reaping, or tilling any land, having their bread daily rained down to them out of heaven, and being furnished with water to satisfy them all, out of a rock ; and the same cloaths with which they came out of Egypt, lasting, without wearing out, all that time. Deut. viii. 4. Never was an instance like this of a nation being thus supported and supplied.

9. God was pleased during this time, to give a farther revelation of Christ the Redeemer in the predictions of him, than had been before. Here are three prophecies given at this time that I would take notice of. The first is that of Balaam, Numb. xxiv. 17---19. ' I shall see him, but not now ; I shall behold him, but not nigh ; there shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies, and Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city.* This

* This was partly fulfilled by David, who subdued the Moabites, and placed garrisons throughout Edom. 2 Sam. viii. 2, 14. 1 Kings

is a plainer prophecy of Christ, especially with regard to his kingly office, than any that had been before. But we have another, that God gave by Moses, which is plainer still, especially with regard to his prophetic office. Deut. xviii. 18, 'I will raise up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I command him.' This is a plainer prophecy of Christ than any that had been before, in this respect, that all the former prophecies were in figurative, mystical language. The first, 'that the seed of the woman should break the serpent's head.' The promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, 'That in their seed all the families of the earth should be blessed.'---The prophecy of Jacob in blessing Judah, and that of Balaam which speaks of Christ under the figurative expression of a star,---were all mystical. But this is a plain literal prophecy.

There are several things contained in this prophecy of Christ, and his mediatorial office, ver. 16. Here it is revealed that he should be a middle person between them and God, a being of such awful majesty, holiness, and justice, that they could not come to him, and enjoy intercourse with him immediately, without a mediator to stand between them; because, if they came to such a dreadful sin-revenging God immediately, they should die; God would prove 'a consuming fire' to them. And here is also a particular revelation of Christ with respect to his prophetic office: 'I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee.' And farther, it is revealed what kind of a prophet he should be, a prophet like Moses, who was the head and leader of all the people; and who, under God, had been their redeemer, to bring them out of the house of bondage, who was, as it were, their shepherd by whom God led them through the Red

xi. 15, 16. But these predictions refer, in a more sublime and exalted sense, to the Messiah, David's Son and Lord. Isai. ix. 6. Amos, v. 25, 26.

Sea and wilderness, and was an intercessor for them with God, and both a prophet and a king in the congregation: for Moses had the power of a king among them. Deut. xxxiii. 5. He was also the prophet by whom God built up his church, and delivered his instructions of worship. Thus Christ was to be a prophet like unto Moses; so that this is both the plainest and fullest prophecy of Christ that ever had been from the beginning of the world to this time,

The next prophecy that I shall take notice of, respects only the calling of the Gentiles, which should be after Christ's coming, of which God gave a very plain prophecy by Moses in the wilderness. Deut. xxxii. 21. They moved God to jealousy, by that which was not a god, by casting him off, and taking other gods, that were no gods, in his room. So God declares that he will move them to jealousy in the like manner, by casting them off, and taking other people, that had not been his people, in their room. The apostle Paul takes notice of this prophecy, as foretelling the calling of the Gentiles, in Rom. x. 19, 20. 'But I say, did not Israel know? First, Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you. But Esaias is very bold, and saith, 'I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest to them that asked not after me.'--- Thus you see how the light of the gospel, which first began to dawn immediately after the fall, gradually increases the nearer we come to Christ's time.

10. Another thing by which God carried on his work at this time, was a remarkable pouring out of his Spirit on the young generation in the wilderness. The generation which was grown up when they came out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, was very froward and perverse. They were tainted with the idolatry and wickedness of Egypt, and were not weaned from it, as the prophet takes notice, Ezek. xx. 6---8. Hence they made the

golden calf in imitation of the idolatry of Egypt, that was wont to worship a bull or an ox; and therefore cattle are called 'the abomination of the Egyptians,' i. e. their idol. Exod. viii. 26. This generation God was exceeding angry with, and swore in his wrath, that they should not enter into his rest. But the younger generation were not so; those who were under twenty years old when they came out of Egypt, and those born in the wilderness, the generation spoken of, Numb. xiv. 31. 'But your little ones, whom ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in; and they shall know the land that ye have despised.' This was the generation with whom the covenant was renewed, (of which we have an account in Deuteronomy,) and that entered into the land of Canaan. These God was pleased to make a generation to his praise, and they were eminent for piety; as appears by many things said in scripture about them; as, particularly, Jer. ii. 2, 3. 'I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown. Israel was holiness to the Lord, and the first fruits of his increase.' Here the generation that went after God in the wilderness is spoken of with very high commendations, as eminent for holiness: 'Israel was holiness to the Lord, and the first fruits of his increase.' And their love to God is spoken of as distinguished like the love of a bride at her espousals. The going after God in the wilderness here spoken of, is not the going of the children of Israel out of Egypt into the wilderness of Sinai, but their following God through that dreadful wilderness that the congregation long wandered in, after they went back from Kadesh-Barnea. Deut. viii. 15. 'Who led thee through the great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water.' Though this generation had a much greater trial, than their fathers had before they came to Kadesh-Barnea, yet they never murmured against God in any wise, as

their fathers had done: but their trials had a contrary effect upon them, to awaken, convince, and humble them, and fit them for great mercy. They were awakened by the awful judgments of God inflicted on their fathers, whereby their carcases fell in the wilderness. And God poured out his Spirit with those awakening providences towards their fathers, and their own travel in the wilderness, and the word preached to them by Moses; whereby they were made to see the badness of their own hearts, and were humbled, and at length multitudes of them savingly converted; as Deut. viii. 2, 3. 'And thou shalt remember the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or no.' And ver. 15. 'Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness,--- that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at the latter end.' And therefore it is said, Hos. xiii. 5, 'I did know thee in the wilderness, in the land of great drought.' God allured them, and brought them into that wilderness, and spake comfortably to them, as it was foretold that he would do afterwards. Hos. ii. 14.

Those terrible judgments that were executed in the congregation after their turning back from Kadesh-Barnea, in the matter of Korah and Peor, were chiefly on the old generation, whom God consumed in the wilderness. Those rebellions were chiefly among the elders of the congregation, that God had given up to their hearts lust; and they walked in their own counsels, and God was grieved with their manners forty years in the wilderness.

But that this younger congregation were eminent for piety, appears by all their history. The former generation were wicked, and were followed with curses; but this was holy, and wonderful blessings followed them. God did great things for them; he sought for them, and gave them the possession of Canaan. And it is God's manner, when he hath

any special mercy to bestow on a visible people, first, to fit them for, and then to bestow it on them. So here, they believed in God, and by faith overcame Sihon and Og, and the giants of Canaan; and are commended for cleaving unto the Lord. Josh. xxiii. 8. Joshua says unto them, 'Cleave unto the Lord your God, as ye have done unto this day;' and so Israel did all the while that generation lived. But when Joshua and all that generation were dead, there arose another that knew not the Lord. This pious generation showed a laudable and fervent zeal for God in several instances; as on occasion of Achan's sin; but especially when they suspected the two tribes and a half had set up an altar in opposition to the altar of burnt-offering. There never was any generation of Israel of which so much good and so little evil is mentioned as this. It is farther observable, that in the time of this generation was the second general circumcision, whereby the reproach of Israel was fully rolled away, and they became pure; and when afterwards they were polluted by Achan, they purged themselves again. Josh. vii. 19—26.

The men of the former generation being dead, and God having sanctified this to himself, he solemnly renewed his covenant with them. Deut. xxix. We find that such renovations of the covenant commonly accompanied any remarkable pouring out of the Spirit, which caused a general reformation: so we find it was in Hezekiah's and Josiah's times. But it is questionable whether there ever was a time when religion so flourished in the Israelitish church, as in that generation; and as in the christian church, religion was in its most flourishing circumstances in the day of its espousals, in the apostle's time, so it seems to have been with the Jewish church in the days of its first establishment in Moses and Joshua's.

Thus God at this time did gloriously advance the work of redemption, both by his word and Spirit. By this out-pouring of the Spirit of God, the work

of redemption was promoted, not only as it was in itself a glorious instance of the application of it, but as this was what God made use of as a means of establishing the church of Israel at its first beginning, when it was settled in the regular observance of God's ordinance in Canaan: even as the outpouring of the Spirit, in the beginning of the Christian church, was a great means God made use of for the well establishing it in the world in all succeeding ages.

11. The next thing I would observe, was God's bringing the people of Israel under the hand of Joshua, and settling them in that land where Christ was to be born, and which was the great type of the heavenly Canaan, which Christ had purchased. This was done by Joshua, who was of Joseph's posterity, and was an eminent type of Christ, and is therefore called 'the shepherd, the stone of Israel,' in Jacob's blessing of Joseph. Gen. xlix. 24.* Being such a type of Christ, he bore the name of Christ. Joshua and Jesus are the same name, only the one is Hebrew, the other Greek; and therefore, in the New Testament, which was originally written in Greek, Joshua is called Jesus. Acts vii. 45. 'Which also our fathers brought in with Jesus, i. e. Joshua. 'If Jesus, or Joshua, had given them rest, he would not have spoken of another day.' Heb. iv. 8.

God wonderfully possessed his people of this land, conquering the former inhabitants of it, and the mighty giants, as Christ conquered the devil; first subduing the great kings of that part of the land that was on the eastern side of Jordan, Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan; and then dividing the river Jordan, as before he had done

* 'Shepherd the stone of Israel.'] From Jacob descended Joseph; or from the God of Jacob it was that Joseph through divine providence was sent into Egypt, to be a shepherd to feed his father's family, and as a stone to uphold and support it; in which he was a type of Christ, the great and good shepherd of the flock, and the stone that is laid in Zion, on which the whole spiritual Israel is built; the foundation stone on which they are laid and are safe, and the corner stone which knits them together Psal. cxviii. 22.

the Red Sea ; causing the walls of Jericho to fall down at the sound of the trumpets of the priest's ; (that typifying the sound of the gospel by the preaching of gospel ministers, and the walls of the accursed city Jericho, the walls of Satan's kingdom ;) and after thus wonderfully destroying the mighty host of the Amorites under the five kings, causing the sun and moon to stand still, to help the people against their enemies, at the prayer of the typical Jesus, Jos. x. 12 ; plainly signifying this, that God would make the whole course of nature to be subservient to the affair of redemption ; so that every thing should yield to the purposes of that work, and give place to the welfare of God's redeemed people.

Thus did Christ show his great love to his elect, that he would make the course of nature to give place to their happiness and prosperity ; and showed that the sun and moon, and all things visible and invisible, were theirs by his purchase. At the same time, Christ fought as the captain of their host, and cast down great hailstones upon their enemies, by which more were slain than by the sword of the children of Israel. And after this he gave the people a mighty victory over a yet greater army in the northern part of the land, that were gathered together at the waters of Merom, as the sand of the sea shore. Josh. xi. 4.

12. Another thing that God did towards carrying on this affair, was his actually setting up his stated worship among the people, as it had been before instituted in the wilderness. This worship was appointed at Mount Sinai, wholly in subserviency to this great affair of redemption. It was to make way for the coming of Christ ; and the innumerable ceremonial observances of it were typical of him and his redemption. This worship was chiefly instituted at Mount Sinai ; but it was gradually put in practice. It was partly set up in the wilderness, where the tabernacle and its vessels were made ; but there were many parts of this instituted worship that could not be observed in the wilderness,

by reason of their unsettled, itinerant state there : and then there were many precepts that respected the land of Canaan, and their cities and places of habitation there ; which therefore could not be put in practice, till they came into the land. But now, when this was brought to pass, God set up his tabernacle in the midst of his people, as he had before promised them, Lev. xxiv. 11. ' I will set my tabernacle amongst you.' The tabernacle was set up at Shiloh, Josh. xviii. 1 ; and the priests and levites had their offices appointed them, and the cities of refuge were also appointed ; and now the people were in condition to observe their feasts of the first fruits, and their feast of ingathering, and to bring all the tithes and offerings to the Lord ; and most parts of God's worship were now observed, though there were some things that were not till afterwards.

13. The next thing I would take notice of, is God's wonderfully preserving the people, from this time forward, when all the males went up, three times in the year, to the place where the ark was. The people of Israel were generally surrounded with enemies, that sought all opportunities to destroy, and dispossess them of their land ; and till David's time there were great numbers in the land of the remains of the Canaanites, and the other former inhabitants, that were bitter enemies to the people of Israel : and these had from year to year, three times in the year, a fair opportunity of overrunning their country, and getting possession of their cities, when all the males were gone, and only the women, and those who were not able to go up, were left behind : yet they were remarkably preserved throughout all generations at such seasons, agreeable to the promise that God had made, Exod. xxxiv. 24. ' Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year.' So wonderfully did God order affairs, and influence the hearts of their enemies, that though they were so full of enmity against Israel, and desired to dispossess them of their land, and had fre-

quently so fair an opportunity; yet we never read, in all their history, of any of their enemies taking these opportunities against them. This was surely a wonderful dispensation of divine Providence; to maintain and promote God's great design of redemption.

14. God's preserving his church and the true religion from being wholly extinct, in the frequent apostasies of the Israelites in the time of the Judges. How prone was that people to forsake the true God, who had done such wonderful things for them, and to fall into idolatry! And how did the land from time to time, seem to be almost overrun with it. But yet God never suffered his true worship to be totally rooted out: his tabernacle stood, the ark was preserved, the book of the law was kept from being destroyed, God's priesthood was upheld, and God still had a church among the people; and time after time, when religion was come to the last extremity, that God granted a revival, and sent some angel, or raised up some eminent person, to be an instrument of their reformation.

15. God's preserving that nation from being destroyed, and delivering them from time to time, although they were so often subdued and brought under the dominion of their enemies. It is a wonder, not only that the true religion was not wholly rooted out, and so the church destroyed that way; but also that the very nation in which that church was, was not utterly destroyed. One while they were subdued by Chushan-rishataim king of Mesopotamia, another while under the Moabites; they were sold into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan; they were brought under the dominion of the Midianites; were sorely distressed by the children of Ammon, and afterward by the Philistines. But yet God, in all these dangers, preserved them from being wholly overthrown; and from time to time, when it was come to extremity, and they were upon the very brink of ruin, God raised up a deliverer, Deut. xxxii. 36. 'For the Lord shall judge his peo-

ple, and repent himself for his servants ; when he seeth their power is gone, and there is none shut up or left,' These remarkable dispensations of providence are set forth in a lively and elegant manner in the cvith Psalm.

The deliverers that God raised up from time to time were all types of Christ, the great Redeemer of his church ; and some of them very remarkably so ; as particularly, Barak, Jephthah, Gideon, Samson, in many particulars ; especially in the acts of Samson, as might be shown, were it not that this would take up too much time.

16. It is observable, that when Christ came to manage the affairs of his church in this period, he often appeared in the form of that nature that he took upon him in his incarnation. So he seems to have appeared to Moses from time to time, and particularly at that time when God spake to him face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend, and he beheld the similitude of the Lord, Numb. xii. 8, after he had besought him to show him his glory ; which was the most remarkable vision that ever he had of Christ. There was a twofold discovery that Moses had of Christ : one was spiritual, when he proclaimed his name, ' The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty ; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the childrens children, unto the third and fourth generation.' Exod. xxxiv. 6, &c. Another was external ; which was that which Moses saw, when Christ passed by, and put him in a cleft of the rock, and covered him with his hand, so that Moses saw his back parts. What he saw was doubtless the back parts of a glorious human form, in which Christ appeared to him, and in all likelihood the form of his glorified human nature, in which he should afterwards appear. He saw not his face ; for it is not to be supposed that any man could subsist under a

sight of the glory of Christ's human nature as it now appears.

So it was an human form in which Christ appeared to the seventy elders. *Exod. xxiv. 9—11.* 'Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel. And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire-stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink.' So Christ appeared afterwards to Joshua in the form of the human nature. *Josh. v. 13, 14.* 'And it came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay, but as Captain of the host of the Lord am I now come.' So he appeared to Gideon, and also to Manoah. *Judg. vi. 11. xiii. 17.* Christ appeared to Manoah in a representation both of his incarnation and death; of his incarnation, in that he appeared in a human form; and of his death and sufferings, represented by his ascending up in the flame of the sacrifice; intimating thereby, that he was to be the great sacrifice that must be offered up to God for a sweet savour, in the fire of his wrath, as that kid was burned and ascended up in the flame. Christ thus appeared, time after time, in the form of that nature he was afterwards to assume, because he now came on the same design, and to carry on the same work, that he was to finish in that nature. Another thing I would mention, done in this period towards the work of redemption, is the beginning of the succession of prophets, and erecting a school of the prophets, in Samuel's time. There was something of this Spirit of prophecy in Israel after Moses, before Samuel. Joshua and many of the judges had a degree of it. Deborah was a prophetess, and some of the high priests were inspired with this spirit, par-

ticularly Eli; and that space of time was not wholly without instances of those that were set apart of God especially to this office, and so were called prophets. Thus the Lord sent a prophet to the children of Israel, and a man of God to Eli. Judg. vi. 8. 1 Sam. ii. 27. But there was no such order of men upheld in Israel for any constancy, before Samuel. The want of it is noticed in 1 Sam. iii. 1: 'And the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision.' But in Samuel there was begun a succession of prophets, that was maintained continually from that time, at least with very little interruption, till the spirit of prophecy ceased about Malachi's time; and therefore Samuel is spoken of in the New Testament as the beginning of the succession of prophets. Acts iii. 24. 'And all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many have spoken, have foretold of these days.' After Samuel was Nathan, and Gad, and Iddo, and Heman, and Asaph, and others. And in the latter end of Solomon's reign, we read of Ahijah: and in Jeroboam and Rehoboam's time we read of prophets; and so one prophet continually succeeded another, till the captivity. Prophets were a constant order of men upheld in the land in those days; and in the time of the captivity there were Ezekiel and Daniel; and after the captivity there were Zechariah, Haggai, and Malachi.

And because God intended a constant succession of prophets from Samuel's time, therefore now was begun a school of the prophets; that is, a school of young men, that were trained up under some great prophet, who was their master and teacher in the study of divine things, and the practice of holiness, to fit them for this office, as God should call them to it. Those young men that belonged to these schools, were called the sons of the prophets; and oftentimes they are called prophets. These at first were under the tuition of Samuel. 1 Sam. xix. 20. 'And when they saw the company of prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over

them.' The company of the prophets that we read of, 1 Sam. x. 5, were the same. Afterwards we read of their being under Elijah. Elisha was one of his sons; but he desired to have a double portion of his spirit, as his successor, or his firstborn: as the eldest son was wont to have a double portion of the estate of his father; and therefore the other sons of the prophets, when they perceived that the spirit of Elijah rested on Elisha, submitted themselves to him, and owned him for their master, as they had done Elijah before. 2 Kings ii. 15. 'And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho, saw him, they said, the spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they bowed themselves to the ground before him.' See also 2 Kings iv. 38.

In Elijah's and Elisha's time, there were several places where there resided companies of these sons of the prophets. There was one at Bethel, another at Jericho, and another at Gilgal, unless that at Gilgal and Jericho were the same; and possibly that which is called the college, where the prophetess Huldah resided, was another at Jerusalem; see 2 Kings xxii. 14. It is there said of Huldah the prophetess, that 'she dwelt in Jerusalem, in the college.' They had houses built, where they used to dwell together; and therefore those at Jericho being multiplied, and finding their house too little for them, desired leave of their master Elisha, that they might go and hew timber to build a larger. 2 Kings vi. 1, 2. Some times there were numbers of these sons of the prophets in Israel; for when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the Lord, it is said that Obadiah took a hundred of them, and hid them by fifties in a cave. 1 Kings xviii. 4.

These schools of the prophets being set up by Samuel, and afterwards kept up by such prophets as Elijah and Elisha, must be of divine appointment; and accordingly we find, that those sons of the prophets were often favoured with a degree of inspiration, while they continued under tuition in the schools of the prophets; and God commonly, when

he called any prophet to the constant exercise of the prophetic office, and to some extraordinary service, took them out of these schools;---though not universally. Hence the prophet Amos, speaking of his being called to the prophetic office, says, that he was one that had not been educated in the schools of the prophets, and was not one of the sons of the prophets. Amos. vii. 14, 15. But Amos's taking notice of it as remarkable, that he should be called to be a prophet who had not been educated at the schools of the prophets, shows that it was God's ordinary manner to take his prophets out of these schools; for therein he did but bless his own institution.

Now this remarkable dispensation of Providence, viz. God's beginning a constant succession of prophets in Samuel's time, that was to last for many ages; and to that end, establishing a school of the prophets under Samuel, thenceforward to be continued in Israel; was in order to promote that great affair of redemption which we are upon. For the main business of this succession of prophets was to foreshew Christ, and the glorious redemption that he was to accomplish, and so prepare the way for his coming. Acts iii. 18---24. x. 43.

As I observed before, the Old Testament time was like a time of night, wherein the church was not wholly without light, but had not the light of the sun directly, but as reflected from the stars. Now these prophets were the stars that reflected the light of the sun; and accordingly they spoke abundantly of Jesus Christ, as appears by what we have of their prophecies in writing. And they made it very much their business, when they studied in their schools or colleges, and elsewhere, to search out the work of redemption; agreeable to what the apostle Peter says of them, 1 Pet. i. 10, 11. 'Of which salvation the prophets have inquired, and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ that was in them did sig-

lify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.' We are told, that the church of the Redeemer is 'built on the foundation of the prophets and apostles, himself being the chief corner stone.' Ephes. ii. 20.

This was the first thing of the nature that ever was done in the world; and it was a great thing that God did towards farther advancing this great building of redemption. There had been before occasional prophecies of Christ, as was shown; but now the time drawing nearer when the Redeemer should come, it pleased God to appoint a certain order of men, in constant succession, whose main business it should be, to foreshow Christ and his redemption, and as his forerunners to prepare the way for his coming; and God established schools, wherein multitudes were instructed and trained up to that end. Rev. xix. 10. 'I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus; for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.'



V. FROM DAVID TO THE BABYLONISH CAPTIVITY.

I COME now to the fifth period of the times of the Old Testament beginning with David, and extending to the Bybalonish captivity; and would now proceed to show how the work of redemption was therein carried on.---And here,

The first thing to be taken notice of, is God's anointing that person who was to be the ancestor of Christ, to be king over his people. The dispensations of Providence which have been taken notice of through the last period, from Moses to this time, respect the nation, but now the scripture-history leads us to consider God's providence towards that particular person whence Christ was to proceed, viz. David. It pleased God at this time remarkably to select out this person from all the thousands of Israel,

and to put a most honourable mark of distinction upon him, by anointing him to be king over his people. It was only God that could find him out. His father's house is spoken of as being little in Israel, and he was the youngest of all the sons of his father, and was least expected to be the man that God had chosen, by Samuel. God had before, in the former ages of the world, remarkably distinguished the persons from whom Christ was to come; as Seth, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The last instance of this was in Jacob's blessing his son Judah; unless we reckon Nahshon's advancement in the wilderness to be the head of the tribe of Judah. Numb. i. 7. But this distinction in the person of David was very honourable: for it was God's anointing him to be king over his people, and thereby something farther was denoted than in the anointing of Saul. God anointed Saul to be king personally; but God intended something farther by sending Samuel to anoint David, viz. to establish the crown of Israel in him and in his family, as long as Israel continued to be a kingdom; and not only so, but what was infinitely more, establishing the crown of his universal church, his spiritual Israel, in his seed, to the end of the world, and throughout eternity.

This was a great dispensation of God, and a great step taken towards a farther advancing of the work of redemption, according as the time drew near wherein Christ was to come. David, as he was the ancestor of Christ, so he was the greatest personal type of Christ under the Old Testament. The types of Christ were of three sorts; instituted, providential, and personal. The ordinance of sacrificing was the greatest of the instituted types; the redemption out of Egypt was the greatest of the providential; and David the greatest of the personal ones. Hence Christ is often called David in the prophecies of scripture. Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24. 'And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; and my servant

David shall be a prince among them. Thus in many other places, he is very often spoken of as the seed or Son of David.

David being the ancestor and great type of Christ, his being solemnly anointed by God to be king over his people, that the kingdom of his church might be continued in his family for ever, may in some respects be looked on as an anointing of Christ himself. Christ was as it were anointed in him; and therefore Christ's anointing and David's anointing are spoken of under one in scripture. Psal. lxxxix. 20. 'I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him.' And David's throne and Christ's are spoken of as one: 'And the Lord shall give him the throne of his father David.' Luke i. 32. 'David, knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne.' Acts ii. 30.

Thus God's beginning of the kingdom of his church in the house of David, was a new establishing of the kingdom of Christ; the beginning of it in a state of such visibility as it thenceforward continued in. It was God's planting the root, whence that Branch of righteousness was afterwards to spring up, which was to be the everlasting King of his church; and therefore this everlasting King is called the Branch from the stem of Jesse. Isa. xi. 1. 'And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.*' Jer. xxii. 5. 'Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper.' Chap. xxxiii.

* 'A rod from the stem of Jesse.' In the preceding chapter the prophet had described the Assyrian army under the image of a mighty forest, cut down to the ground, by the axe wielded by the hand of some powerful and illustrious agent. In opposition to this image he represents the great person, who makes the subject of this chapter, as a slender twig, shooting out from the trunk of an old tree, cut down, lopped to the very root, and decayed; which tender plant, so weak in appearance, should nevertheless become fruitful and prosper. That this prophecy relates to the Messiah, we have the express authority of St. Paul. Rom. xv. 12.

15. 'In those days, and at that time, I will cause the branch of righteousness to grow up unto David, and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.' So Christ, in the New Testament, is called the root and offspring of David. Rev. xxii. 16.

It is observable, that God anointed David after Saul to reign in his room. He took away the crown from him, who was higher in stature than any of his people, and was in their eyes fittest to bear rule, to give it to David, who was low of stature, and in comparison, of despicable appearance : so God was pleased to show how Christ, who appeared without form or comeliness, and was despised and rejected of men, should take the kingdom from the great ones of the earth. And also it is observable, that David was the youngest of Jesse's sons, as Jacob the younger brother supplanted Esau, and got the birthright and blessing from him ; and as Pharez, brother of Christ's ancestor, supplanted Zarah in his birth ; and as Isaac, another of the ancestors of Christ, cast out his elder brother Ishmael ; thus was that frequent saying of Christ fulfilled, 'The last shall be first, and the first last.'

2. The next thing I would observe, is God's preserving David's life, by a series of wonderful providences till Saul's death. I have above taken notice of the wonderful preservation of other ancestors of Christ ; as Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ; and have observed how, in that Christ the great Redeemer was to proceed from them, that in their preservation, the work of redemption itself may be looked upon as preserved from being defeated, and the whole church, which is redeemed through him, from being overthrown. But the preservation of David was not less remarkable than that of any others already taken notice of. How often was there but a step between him and death. The first instance of it we have in his encountering a lion and a bear, which, without miraculous assistance, could at once have rent this young stripling in pieces, as

easily as they could the lamb which he delivered from them. So afterwards the root and offspring of David was preserved from the roaring lion that goes about seeking whom he may devour; who was conquered, and the souls of men rescued as lambs out of the mouth of this lion. Another remarkable deliverance was from that mighty giant Goliath, who was strong enough to have given his flesh to the beasts of the field, and to the fowls of the air as he threatened: but God preserved David and gave him the victory, so that he cut off his head with his own sword. Christ slew the spiritual Goliath with his own weapon, the cross, and so delivered his people. And how remarkably did God preserve him from being slain by Saul, when he first sought his life, by giving his daughter to be a snare to him, that the hand of the Philistines might be upon him: and afterwards, when Saul spake to Jonathan, and to all his servants, to kill him; also in inclining Jonathan, instead of murdering, to love him as his own soul, and to be a great instrument of his preservation, even at the hazard of his own life, though one would have thought that none would have been more willing to have David killed than Jonathan, seeing that he was competitor with him for the crown. Again the Lord wonderfully preserved him, when Saul threw a javelin to smite him to the wall; and when he sent messengers to his house, to watch for and to kill him, when Michal, Saul's daughter, let him down through a window; likewise when he afterwards sent messengers once and again, to Naioth in Ramah, to take him, and they were remarkably prevented by being seized with miraculous impressions of the Spirit of God; and even when Saul, being resolute in the affair, went himself, he also was among the prophets. Again after this, how wonderfully was David's life preserved at Gath among the Philistines, when he went to Achish, the king of Gath, and was there in the hands of the Philistines, who, one would have thought, would have dispatched him at once, he having so much

provoked them by his exploits against them. How wonderfully did God deliver him at Keilah, when he had entered into a fenced town, where Saul thought he was sure of him. When he pursued and hunted him in the mountains; when the army encompassed him in the wilderness of Maon. How was he delivered in the cave of Engedi, when instead of Saul's killing David, God delivered Saul into his hands in the cave, and cut off his skirt, and might as easily have cut off his head; and afterwards also in the wilderness of Ziph; and again a second time in the land of the Philistines, though David had conquered them at Keilah, since he was last among them. This, one would think, would have been a sufficient warning to them not to trust him, or let him escape a second time; but yet now, God wonderfully turned their hearts to him to befriend and protect, instead of destroying him.

Thus was the precious seed that virtually contained the Redeemer, and all the blessings of his redemption, wonderfully preserved, when hell and earth were conspired against it to destroy it. How often does David himself take notice of this, with praise and admiration, in the book of Psalms.

3. About this time, the written word of God was enlarged by Samuel. I have before observed, that the canon of scripture was begun, and the first written word of God was given to the church about Moses's time: and many, and I know not but most divines, think it was added to by Joshua, and that he wrote the last chapter of Deuteronomy, and most of the book of Joshua. Others think that Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and part of the first book of Samuel, were written by Samuel. However that was, this we have good evidence of, that Samuel made an addition to the canon of scripture; for he is manifestly mentioned in the New Testament, as one of the prophets whose writings we have in the scriptures. 'Yea, and all the prophets, from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.' Acts iii. 24.

By that expression, 'as many as have spoken,' cannot be meant, as many as have spoken by word of mouth; for every prophet did that: but the meaning must be, as many as have spoken by writing, so that what they have spoken has come down to us.

The way that Samuel spoke of these times of Christ and the gospel, was by giving the history of the things that typified and pointed to them, particularly those concerning David. The Spirit of God moved him to commit those things to writing, chiefly for that reason, and, as was said before, this was the main business of all that succession of prophets, that began in Samuel.

That Samuel added to the canon of the scriptures seems farther to appear from 1 Cor. xxix. 29. 'Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer.' Whether the book of Joshua was written by Samuel or not, yet it is the general opinion of divines, that the books of Judges, and Ruth, and part of the first book of Samuel, were penned by him. The book of Ruth was penned for that reason, because though it seemed to treat of private affairs, yet the persons chiefly spoken of in it were of the family whence David and Christ proceeded, and so pointed to what the apostle Peter observed of Samuel and the other prophets, in the iii. chapter of Acts. These additions to the canon of scripture, the great and main instrument of the application of redemption, are to be considered as a farther continuation of that work, and an addition made to that great building.

4. Another thing God did towards this work, at that time, was his inspiring David to show forth Christ and his redemption, in divine songs; which should be for the use of the church, in public worship, throughout all ages. David was himself endued with the spirit of prophecy. Acts ii. 26, 30. 'Let me freely speak to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day: therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath,' &c.

So that herein he was a type of Christ, that he was both a prophet and a king. The oil that was used in anointing David was a type of the Spirit of God; and the type and the antetype were given together. 'Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward.' 1 Sam. xvi. 13.

One way that this Spirit influenced him was, by inspiring him to show forth Christ, and the glorious things of his redemption, in divine songs, sweetly expressing the breathings of a pious soul, full of admiration of the glorious things of the Redeemer, inflamed with divine love, and elevated with praise; and therefore he is called the sweet psalmist of Israel. 2 Sam. xxiii. 1. 'Now these be the last words of David: David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel.' The main subjects of these sweet songs were the glorious things of the gospel, as is evident by the interpretation given and the use made of them in the New Testament: for there is no one book of the Old Testament so often quoted in the New, as the book of Psalms. Joyfully did this holy man sing of those great things of Christ's redemption, that had been the hope and expectation of God's church and people from the beginning, and as joyfully did others follow him in it; viz. Asaph, Heman, Éthan, and others; for the book of Psalms was not all penned by David, though the greater part of it was. Hereby the canon of scripture was farther increased, and an excellent portion of divine writ added to it.

This was a great advancement that God made in this building; and the light of the gospel, which had been gradually brightening ever since the fall, was now exceedingly increased by it; for whereas before there was but here and there a prophecy given of Christ in several ages, now David, in a variety of songs, speaks of his incarnation, life,

death, resurrection, ascension into heaven, satisfaction, and intercession : his prophetic, kingly, and priestly office ; his glorious benefits in this life and that which is to come ; his union with the church, and the blessedness of the church in him ; the calling of the Gentiles, the future glory of the church near the end of the world, and Christ's coming to the final judgment. All these things, and many more, concerning Christ and his redemption, are abundantly spoken of in the book of Psalms.

This was also a glorious advancement of the affair of redemption, as God hereby gave his church a book of divine songs for their use in that part of their public worship, viz. singing his praises, throughout all ages to the end of the world. It is manifest the book of Psalms was given of God for this end. It was used in the church of Israel by God's appointment ; as appears by the title of many of them, in which they are inscribed 'to the chief musician,' i. e. to the man that was appointed to be the leader of divine songs in the temple, in the public worship of Israel. So David is called the sweet psalmist of Israel, because he penned psalms for the use of the church of Israel ; and accordingly we have an account that they were sung in the church for that end ages after David was dead. 2 Chron. xxix. 30. 'Moreover Hezekiah the king, and the princes, commanded the Levites to sing praises unto the Lord, with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer.' And we find that the same were appointed in the New Testament to be made use of in the Christian church, in their worship. Ephes. v. 19. 'Speaking to yourselves in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.' Col. iii. 16. 'Admonishing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.' And so they have been, and will to the end of the world, be used in the church to celebrate the praises of God. The people of God before this, were wont to worship him by singing songs to his praise ; as they did at the Red Sea ; and they had Moses's song, Deut. xxxii. committed to them for that end ; and Deborah,

and Barak, and Hannah, sung praises to God : but now first did God commit to his church a book of divine songs for their constant use.

5. The next thing I would take notice of, is God's actually exalting David to the throne of Israel, notwithstanding all the opposition made to it. God was determined to do it, and he made every thing give place that stood in the way of it. He removed Saul and his sons out of the way ; and first set David over the tribe of Judah ; and then, having removed Ishbosheth, set him over all Israel. Thus did God fulfil his word to David. He took him from the sheep-cote, and made him king over his people Israel. Psalm lxxviii. 70, 71. And now the throne of Israel was established in that family in which it was to continue for ever, even for ever and ever.

6. Now God first chose a particular city of all the tribes of Israel to place his name in it. Mention is made several times in the law of Moses, of the children of Israel's bringing their oblations to the place which God should chuse ; but God had never proceeded to do it till now. Deut. xii. 5---7. The tabernacle and ark were never fixed, but removed sometimes to one place and sometimes to another. The city of Jerusalem was never thoroughly conquered, or taken out of the hands of the Jebusites, till David's time. It is said in Joshua, ' As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out : but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day.' But now David wholly subdued it, and God chose that city to place his name there, as appears by David's bringing up the ark thither soon after : and therefore this is mentioned afterwards, as the first time God chose a city to place his name therein. 2 Chron. vi. 5, 6. xii. 13. Afterwards God showed David the very place where he would have his temple built, viz. in the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

The city of Jerusalem is therefore called the holy

city; and it was the greatest type of the church of Christ in all the Old Testament. It was redeemed by David, the captain of the hosts of Israel, out of the hands of the Jebusites, to be God's city, the holy place of his rest for ever, where he would dwell; as Christ, the captain of his people's salvation, redeems his church out of the hands of devils, to be his holy and beloved city. And therefore how often does the scripture, when speaking of Christ's redemption of his church, call it by the names of Zion and Jerusalem? This was the city that God had appointed to be the place of the first gathering of converts after Christ's resurrection, of that remarkable effusion of the Spirit of God on the apostles and primitive Christians, and the place whence the gospel was to sound forth into all the world; the place of the first Christian church, that was to be, as it were, the mother of all other churches through the world; agreeable to that prophecy, Isai. ii. 3, 4. 'Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem; and he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people.' Thus God chose Mount Sion, whence the gospel was to be published, as the law had been from Mount Sinai.

7. The next thing to be observed here, is God's solemnly renewing the covenant of grace with David, and promising that the Messiah should be of his seed. We have an account of it in the viith chapter of the second book of Samuel. It was on occasion of the thoughts David entertained of building God an house, that God sent Nathan the prophet to him, with the glorious promises of the covenant of grace. It is especially contained in these words, ver. 16. 'And thy house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee; thy throne shall be established for ever.' Which promise has respect to Christ, the seed of David, and is fulfilled in him only; for the kingdom of David has long since ceased, any otherwise than as it is upheld in Christ. The temporal kingdom of the house of David has

now ceased for a great many ages ; even more than ever it stood.

That this covenant that God now established with David by Nathan the prophet, was the covenant of grace, is evident by the plain testimony of scripture, in Isai. lv. 1---3. There we have Christ inviting sinners to come to the waters ; and in the third verse he says, ‘ Incline your ear, come unto me ; hear, and your souls shall live ; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David.’ Here Christ offers to convinced sinners, an interest in the same everlasting covenant that he made with David, conveying to them the same sure mercies. But what is that covenant that sinners obtain an interest in, when they come to Christ, but the covenant of grace ?

This was the fifth solemn ratification of the covenant of grace with the church after the fall. The first was with Adam ; the second with Noah ; the third with the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ; the fourth was in the wilderness by Moses, and now the fifth is this made to David.

This establishment of the covenant of grace with David, he always esteemed the greatest favour of God to him, the greatest honour that God had conferred upon him ; he prized and rejoiced in it above all the other blessings of his reign. You may see how joyfully and thankfully he received it, when Nathan came to him with the glorious message, in 2 Sam. vii. 18. And so David, in his last words, declares this to be all his salvation, and all his desire. ‘ He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure : for this is all my salvation, and all my desire.’ 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

8. It was by David that God first gave his people Israel the possession of the whole promised land. I have before shown, how God’s giving the possession of the promised land belonged to the covenant of grace. This was done in a great measure by Joshua, but not fully. Joshua did not wholly subdue that part of the promised land that was strictly

called the land of Canaan, and that was divided by lot to the several tribes; but there were great numbers of the old inhabitants left unsubdued, as we read in the books of Joshua and Judges; and there were many left to prove Israel, and to be 'thorns in their sides, and pricks in their eyes.' There were the Jebusites in Jerusalem, and many of the Canaanites, and the whole nation of the Philistines, who all dwelt in that part of the land that was divided by lot, and chiefly in that which belonged to the tribes of Judah and Ephraim.

Thus the remains of the old inhabitants of Canaan continued till David's time; but he wholly subdued them. This is agreeable to what St. Stephen observes, 'Which also our fathers brought in with Jesus (i. e. Joshua) into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David.' Acts vii. 45. They were till the days of David in driving them out; but David entirely brought them under. He subdued the Jebusites, the whole nation of the Philistines, and all the remains of the seven nations of Canaan. 'Now after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them, and took Gath and her towns out of the hands of the Philistines.' 1 Chron. xviii. 1.

After this, all the remains of the former inhabitants of Canaan were made bond-servants to the Israelites. Before this the posterity of the Gibeonites were hewers of wood, and drawers of water, for the house of God. But Solomon, David's son and successor, put all the remains of the other seven nations of Canaan to bond-service, or at least made them pay a tribute of bond-service. 1 Kings ix. 20---22. Hence we read of the children of Solomon's servants, after the return from the Babylonish captivity. Ezra. ii. 55. Neh. xi. 3. They were the children or posterity of the seven nations of Canaan, that Solomon had subjected to bond-service.

Thus David subdued the whole land of Canaan, strictly so called. But then that was not one half;

nor quarter of what God had promised to their fathers. The land promised to their fathers included all the countries from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates. These were the bounds of the land promised to Abraham. Gen. xv. 18. 'In that same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt, unto the great river, the river Euphrates.' So again God promised at mount Sinai, saying, 'And I will set thy bounds from the Red sea even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river: for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and thou shalt drive them out before thee. Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread, shall be yours: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea, shall your coast be.' Exod. xxiii. 31. Deut. xi. 24. The same promise is made to Joshua: 'Every place that the sole of your feet shall tread upon, have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses; from the wilderness and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates. All the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea, towards the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.' Josh. i. 3, 4. But what Joshua gave the people the possession of, was but a small part of this land. And the people never had had the possession of it, till God gave it them by David.

This large country not only included that Canaan which was divided by lot to those who came in with Joshua, but the land of the Moabites and Ammonites, the land of the Amalekites, and the rest of the Edomites, and the country of Zobah. All these nations were subdued, and brought under the children of Israel by David; and he put garrisons into the several countries, and they became David's servants. David extended their border to the river Euphrates, as was promised; 'and David smote also Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to recover his border at the river Euphrates.' 2 Sam. viii. Accordingly we read, that Solomon his

son 'had dominion over all the region on this side the river, from Tiphseh even unto Azzah, over all the kings on this side the river.' 1 Kings iv. 24. This, Artaxerxes king of Persia takes notice of long after. 'There have been mighty kings also over Jerusalem, which have ruled over all countries beyond the river; and toll, tribute, and custom was paid unto them.' Ezra. iv. 20.

Joshua, that type of Christ, did but begin the work of giving Israel the possession of the promised land; and left it to be finished by that much greater type and ancestor of Christ, even David, who subdued far more of that land than ever Joshua had done. In this extent of his and Solomon's dominion there was some resemblance of the great extent of Christ's kingdom, which is thus expressed: 'He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.' Psal. lxxii. 8.

9. God by David perfected the Jewish worship, and added to it several new institutions. The law was given by Moses, but all the institutions of the Jewish worship were not; some were afterwards added by divine direction. So this great type of Christ did not only perfect Joshua's work, in giving Israel the possession of the promised land, but he also finished Moses's work, in perfecting the instituted worship of Israel. Thus there must be a number of typical prophets, priests, and princes, to complete one figure or shadow of Christ the anti type, he being the substance of all the types and shadows. Of so much more glory was Christ accounted worthy, than Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, and all the prophets, priests, and princes, judges, and saviours of the Old Testament.

The ordinances of David are mentioned as of equal validity with those of Moses. 'Also Jehoiada appointed the offices of the house of the Lord by the hand of the priests, the levites, whom David had distributed in the house of the Lord, to offer the burnt-offerings of the Lord, as it is written in

the law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, as it was ordained by David.' 2 Chron. xxiii. 18. The worship of Israel was perfected by David, by the addition that he made to the ceremonial law, which we have an account of from the xxiiird to the xxvth chapters of the first book of Chronicles, consisting in the several orders and courses into which David divided the levites, and the work and business to which he appointed them, different from what Moses had done; and also in the divisions of the priests the sons of Aaron into four and twenty courses, assigning to every course their business in the house of the Lord, and their particular stated times of attendance there: and appointing some of the levites to a new office, which was that of singers; and particularly ordering and regulating them in that office, as you may see in the xxvth chapter of the 1 Chronicles. He also appointed others of the levites to the several services of porters, treasurers, officers, and judges: and these ordinances of David were kept up henceforth in the church of Israel, as long as it remained. Thus we find the several orders of priests and the levites, the porters and singers, after the captivity. So we find the courses of the priests appointed by David still continuing in the New Testament. Zacharias the father of John the Baptist was a priest of the course of Abia, which is the same with the course of Abijah appointed by David. 1 Chron. xxiv. 10.

Thus David as well as Moses was like Christ in this respect, that by him God gave in some degree a new ecclesiastical establishment, and a new institution of worship. Not only so, but by those additions David abolished some of the old institutions of Moses that had been in force till that time; particularly those laws that appointed the business of the levites, which we have in the iiird and ivth chapters of Numbers, which very much consisted in their charges of the several parts and utensils of the tabernacle there assigned to them, and in carrying those several parts of the tabernacle. But those

laws were now abolished by David; and they were no more to carry those things, as they had been used to do. But David appointed them to other work instead of it. 1 Chron. xxiii. 26. Also to the levites he said, 'they shall no more carry the tabernacle, nor any vessels of it for the service thereof:' a sure evidence that the ceremonial law given by Moses is not perpetual, as the Jews suppose, but might be wholly abolished by Christ: for if David, a type of the Messiah, might abolish the law of Moses in part, much more might the Messiah himself abolish the whole.

David, by God's appointment, abolished all use of the tabernacle that was built by Moses, and of which he had the pattern from God: for God now revealed it to David to be his will, that a temple should be built, that should be instead of the tabernacle. A presage of what Christ, the son of David, would do, when he should come, viz. abolish the whole Jewish ecclesiastic constitution, which was but as a moveable tabernacle, to set up the spiritual gospel temple, which was to be far more glorious, and of greater extent, and was to last for ever. David had the pattern of all things pertaining to the temple shown him, even in like manner as Moses had the pattern of the tabernacle: and Solomon built the temple according to that pattern which he had from his father David, which he received from God. 1 Chron. xxviii. 11, 12, 19. 'Then David gave to Solomon his son, the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy-seat; and the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of all the house of the Lord, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things.---All this, said David, the Lord made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern.'

10. The canon of scripture seems about the close

of David's reign to have been farther enlarged by the prophets Nathan and Gad. It appears probable by the scriptures, that they carried on the history of the two books of Samuel from the place where Samuel first left it, and finished them. These seem to be the book that in scripture is called the book of Samuel the seer, and Nathan the prophet, and Gad the Seer. 'Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold they are written in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer.' 1 Chron. xxix. 29.

11. The next thing I would take notice of, is God's wonderfully continuing the kingdom of his visible people in the line of Christ's legal ancestors, as long as they remained an independent kingdom. Thus it was without any material interruption. Indeed the kingdom of all the tribes was not kept in that line; but the dominion of that part of Israel in which the true worship of God was upheld, and which were God's visible people, was always kept in the family of David, as long as there was any such thing as an independent king of Israel, according to his promise to David: and not only in the family of David, but always in that part of his posterity that was the line whence Christ legally descended; so that the very person that was Christ's legal ancestor, was always in the throne, excepting Jehoahaz, who reigned three months, and Zedekiah; as you may see in Matthew's genealogy of Christ.

Christ was legally descended from the kings of Judah, though not naturally. He was both legally and naturally descended from David. He was naturally descended from Nathan the son of David; for Mary his mother was one of the posterity of David by Nathan, as you may see in Luke's genealogy. But Joseph, the reputed and legal father of Christ, was naturally descended of Solomon and his successors, as we have an account in Matthew's genealogy. Jesus Christ, though he was not the natural son of Joseph, yet by the law and constitution of the Jews, he was Joseph's heir, because he

was the lawful son of Joseph's lawful wife, conceived while she was his legally espoused wife. The Holy Ghost raised up seed to him. A person, by the law of Moses, might be the legal son and heir of another, whose natural son he was not. Sometimes a man raised up seed to his brother; a brother, in some cases, was to build up a brother's house. Thus the Holy Ghost built up Joseph's house. And Joseph being in the direct line of the kings of Judah, of the house of David, he was the legal heir of the crown of David; and Christ being legally his first-born son, he was his heir; and so Christ, by the law, was the proper heir of the crown of David, and is therefore said to sit upon the throne of his father David.

The crown of God's people was wonderfully kept in the line of Christ's legal ancestors. When David was old, and not able any longer to manage the affairs of the kingdom, Adonijah, one of his sons, set up to be king, and seemed to have obtained his purpose. But Adonijah was not that son of David which was the ancestor of Joseph, the legal father of Christ; and therefore how wonderfully did Providence work here; what a strange and sudden revolution! All Adonijah's kingdom and glory vanished away as soon as it was begun; and Solomon, the legal ancestor of Christ, was established in the throne. And after Solomon's death, when Jeroboam had conspired against the family, and Rehoboam carried himself so that it was a wonder all Israel was not provoked to forsake him, and ten tribes did actually forsake him, and set up Jeroboam in opposition to him; and though Rehoboam was a wicked man, and deserved to have been rejected altogether from being king, yet he being the legal ancestor of Christ, God kept the kingdom of the two tribes, in which the true religion was upheld, in his possession; and notwithstanding his son Abijam was another wicked prince, yet they being legal ancestors of Christ, God still continued the crown in the family, and gave it to Abijam's son Asa. And afterwards, though many of the kings of

Judah were very wicked, and horridly provoked God, as particularly Jehoram, Ahaziah, Ahaz, Manasseh, and Amon ; yet God did not take away the crown from their family, but gave it to their sons for the same reason. So speaking of Abijam, it is said, ' Nevertheless, for David's sake did the Lord his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem.' Also when speaking of Jehoram's great wickedness, it is said, ' Howbeit the Lord would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that he had made with David, and as he had promised to give a light unto him, and to his sons for ever.' 1 Kings xv. 4. 2 Chron. xxi. 7.

The crown of the ten tribes was changed from one family to another continually. First, Jeroboam took it ; but the crown remained in his family only one generation after his death, it only descended to his son Nadab ; and then Baasha, who was of another family, took it, and it remained in his posterity but one generation also after his death. Then Zimri, who was his servant, took it ; and then, without descending at all to his posterity, Omri took it, and the crown continued in his family for three successions. Next Jehu, who was of another family, took it, and the crown continued in his family for three or four successions ; and then Shallum, who was of another family, took it ; and the crown did not descend at all to his posterity, but Menahem took it, and it remained in his family but one generation after him. Then Pekah, of another family, took it, and after him Hoshea, who was still of another family. So great a difference was there between the crown of Israel, and the crown of Judah ; the one was continued evermore in the same family, and with very little interruption, in one right line ; the other was continually tossed about from one family to another, as if it were the sport of fortune. The reason was not because the kings of Judah, many of them, were better than the kings of Israel, but the one had the blessing in them ; they were the an-

cestors of Christ, whose right it was to sit on the throne of Israel. But with the kings of Israel it was not so; and therefore Divine Providence exercised a continual care, through all the changes that happened in so many generations, and such a long space of time, to keep the crown of Judah in one direct line, in fulfilment of the everlasting covenant he had made with David, the mercies of which covenant were sure mercies: but in the other case, there was no such covenant, and so no such care of providence.

Here it must not be omitted, that there was once a very strong conspiracy of the kings of Syria and Israel, in the time of that wicked king of Judah, Ahaz, to dispossess him and his family of the throne of Judah, and to set on it one of another family, even the son of Tabeal. Isai. vii. 6. 'Let us go up against Judah, and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeal.' And they seemed very likely to accomplish their purpose, insomuch that it is said, ver. 2, 'The heart of Ahaz and his people was moved, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.' On this occasion God sent the prophet Isaiah to encourage the people, and tell them that it should not come to pass. And because the case seemed so desperate that Ahaz and the people would very hardly believe, therefore God directs the prophet to give them this sign, viz. that Christ should be born of the legal seed of Ahaz. Isai. vii. 14. 'Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.' This was a good sign, and a great confirmation of the truth of what God promised by Isaiah, that the kings of Syria and Israel should never accomplish their purpose of dispossessing the family of Ahaz of the crown of Judah, for Christ the Immanuel was to be of them.--I have mentioned this dispensation of providence in this place, because though it was con-

tinued for so long a time, yet it began in Solomon's succession to the throne of his father David.

12. The next thing I would take notice of is, the building of the temple : a great type of three things, viz. of the human nature of Christ, of the church, and of heaven. The tabernacle seemed rather to represent the church in its moveable, changeable state in this world. But that beautiful, glorious costly structure of the temple that succeeded the tabernacle, and was immoveably fixed, seems especially to represent the church in its glorified state in heaven. This temple was built according to the pattern shewn by the Holy Ghost to David, and by divine direction given to David, in the place where was the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, in Mount Moriah. 2 Chron. iii. 1. In the same mountain, and doubtless in the very same place, Abraham offered up his son Isaac ; for that is said to be a mountain in the land of Moriah, which mountain was called the mountain of the Lord, as this mountain of the temple was. ' And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh ; as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.' Gen. xxii. 2, 14.

That the human nature of Christ was the anti-type of this temple, appears, because Christ being shown the temple of Jerusalem, says, ' Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up,' speaking of the temple of his body. John ii. 19, 20. This house, or a house built in this place, continued to be the house of God, where his church worshipped till Christ came. Here was the place that God chose, where all their sacrifices were offered up till the great sacrifice came, and all others ceased. Into this temple, or rather the temple afterwards built in this place, the Lord came, ' even the messenger of the covenant.' Here he often delivered his heavenly doctrine, and wrought miracles ; here his church was gathered by the pouring out of the Spirit, after his ascension. Luke xxiv. 53. Speaking of the

disciples, after Christ's ascension, it is said, 'And they were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.' And of the multitude that were converted by that great out-pouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, it is said, 'they continued daily with one accord in the temple.' The apostles also were 'daily in the temple, and in every house, where they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.' Hence the sound of the doctrine went forth, and the church spread into all the world. Acts ii. 46. v. 42.

13. It is here worthy to be observed, that at this time, in Solomon's reign, after the temple was finished, the Jewish church was raised to its highest external glory. The Jewish church, or its ordinances and constitution, is compared to the moon. Rev. xii. 1. 'And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.' As this church was like the moon in many other respects, so it was in this, that it waxed and waned like it. From the first foundation of it, in the covenant made with Abraham, when this moon was now beginning to appear, it had to this time been gradually increasing in its glory. This time, wherein the temple was finished and dedicated, was about the middle between the calling of Abraham and the coming of Christ, and now it was full moon. After this the glory of the Jewish church gradually decreased, till Christ came; as I shall have occasion more particularly to observe presently.

Now the church of Israel was in its highest external glory: now Israel was multiplied exceedingly, so that they seemed to have become like the sand on the sea shore. 1 Kings iv. 20. Now the kingdom of Israel was firmly established in the family of which Christ was to come; now God had chosen the city where he would place his name; now he had fully given his people the possession of the promised land, in quietness and peace, even from the

river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates; and all those nations that had formerly been their enemies, quietly submitted to them; none pretended to rebel against them. Now the Jewish worship in all its ordinances was fully settled: now, instead of a moveable tent and tabernacle, they had a glorious temple; the most magnificent, beautiful, and costly structure, that then was, ever had been, or has been since. Now the people enjoyed peace and plenty, and sat every man under his vine and fig-tree, eating and drinking, and making merry. 1 Kings iv. 20. Now they were in the highest pitch of earthly prosperity, silver being as plentiful as stones, and the land full of gold and precious stones, and other precious foreign commodities, which were brought by Solomon's ships from Ophir, and which came from other parts of the world. Now they had a king reigning over them who was the wisest of men, and probably the greatest earthly prince that ever was. Now their fame went abroad into all the world, so that many came from the utmost parts of the earth to see their glory and their happiness.

Thus God was pleased, in one of the ancestors of Christ, remarkably to shadow forth the kingdom of Christ reigning in his glory. David, who was a man of war, a man who had shed much blood, and whose life was full of troubles and conflicts, was more of a representation of Christ in his state of humiliation, his militant state, wherein he was conflicting with his enemies. But Solomon, who was a man of peace, was a representation more especially of Christ exalted, triumphing, and reigning in his kingdom of peace. And the happy glorious state of the Jewish church at that time did remarkably represent two things. (1) That glorious state of the church on earth, that shall be in the latter ages of the world; those days of peace, when nation shall not lift sword against nation, nor learn war any more. (2) The future glorified state of the church in heaven: the earthly Canaan was never so lively a type of the heavenly Canaan as it was

then, when the happy people of Israel did indeed enjoy it as a land flowing with milk and honey.

14. After this the glory of the Jewish church gradually declined more and more till Christ came; yet not so but that the work of redemption still went on. Whatsoever failed or declined, God still carried on this work from age to age; this building was still advancing higher and higher. It still went on during the decline of the Jewish church, towards a further preparation for the coming of Christ, as well as during its increase; for so wonderfully were things ordered by the infinitely wise Governor of the world, that whatever happened was ordered for good to this general design, and made a means of promoting it. When the people of the Jews flourished, and were in prosperity, he made that to contribute to the promoting this design; and when they were in adversity, God made this also to contribute to the carrying on of the same. While the Jewish church was in its increasing state, the work of redemption was carried on by their increase; and when they came to their declining state, from Solomon's time till the appearing of Christ, God carried on the work of redemption by that. The very decline itself was one thing that God made use of as a farther preparation for Christ's coming.

As the moon from the time of its full, is approaching nearer and nearer to her conjunction with the sun; so her light is still more and more decreasing, till at length when the conjunction comes, it is wholly swallowed up in the light thereof. So it was with the Jewish church from the time of its highest glory in Solomon's time. In the latter end of Solomon's reign, the state of things began to darken, by Solomon's corrupting himself with idolatry, which much obscured the glory of this wise and mighty prince; now it was, troubles began to arise in his kingdom; and after his death it was divided, and the ten tribes withdrew from the true worship of God, and set up the golden calves at Bethel and Dan. Presently after this the number of the ten

tribes was greatly diminished in the battle of Jeroboam with Abijah, when there fell down slain of Israel five hundred thousand chosen men; which loss the kingdom of Israel never entirely recovered.

Now also the kingdom of Judah was greatly corrupted. In Ahab's time the kingdom of Israel did not only worship the calves of Bethel and Dan, but the worship of Baal was introduced. Before, they pretended to worship the true God by these images, the calves of Jeroboam; but now Ahab introduced gross idolatry, and the direct worship of false gods in the room of the true God.* The worship of Baal was soon after introduced into the kingdom of Judah, viz. in Jehoram's reign, by his marrying Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab. After this God began to cut Israel short, by finally destroying and sending into captivity that part of the people that dwelt beyond Jordan. 2 Kings x. 32. Then Tiglath-Pilezer subdued and captivated all those of the northern parts of the land. 2 Kings xv. 29. At last all the ten tribes were subdued by Salmaneser, and finally carried captive out of their own land. After this also the kingdom of Judah was carried captive into Babylon, and a great part of the nation never returned. Those that returned were but a small number, compared with what had been carried captive; and for the most part after this they were dependent on the power of other states, being subject one while to the kings of Persia, then to the monarchy of the Grecians, afterwards to the Romans. And before Christ's time, the church of the Jews was become exceedingly corrupt, overrun with superstition and self-righteousness. How small a flock was the church of Christ in the days of his incarnation!

* It has been conjectured, that the golden calves originated from the cherubic figures, one animal in which was a calf or young bull. Some have even supposed that this part of the Egyptian idolatry sprang from the same source, and that at first they were only used as the medium of worship, and emblems of the Deity. But as the nature of sin is progressive, so one degree of idolatry leads to another; and when men once conceived the Deity to resemble calves, it was but one step farther to worship the calves themselves.

God, by his gradual decline of the Jewish state and church from Solomon's time, prepared the way for the coming of Christ several ways.

(1) The decline of the glory of this legal dispensation made way for the introduction of the more glorious dispensation of the gospel. The ancient dispensation, such as it was in Solomon's time, had no glory, when compared with the spiritual dispensation introduced by Christ. The church, under the Old Testament, was a child under tutors and governors, and God dealt with it as a child. Those pompous externals are called by the apostle 'weak and beggarly elements.' It was fit that those things should be diminished as Christ approached. John the Baptist, his forerunner, speaking of him says, 'He must increase, but I must decrease.' John iii. 30. It is fit that the twinkling stars should gradually withdraw their glory, when the sun is approaching towards his rising.

(2) This gradual decline also tended to prepare for Christ's coming, as it displayed the glory of God's power, in the great effects of his redemption. God's people being so diminished and weakened by one step after another, till Christ came, was very much like the diminishing of Gideon's army. God told Gideon that the people that were with him were too many for him to deliver the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel should vaunt themselves against him, saying, 'My own hand hath saved me.' Therefore all that were fearful were commanded to return; and there returned twenty and two thousand, and there remained ten thousand. But still they were too many; and then, by trying the people at the water, they were reduced to three hundred men. So the people in Solomon's time were too many, and mighty, and glorious for Christ; therefore he diminished them. First, by sending off the ten tribes, and then by the captivity into Babylon; afterwards they were farther diminished by the great and general corruption that there was when Christ came; so that Christ found very few godly

persons among them, and with a small handful of disciples he conquered the world. Thus high things were brought down, that Christ might be exalted.

(3) This prepared the way for Christ's coming, as it made the salvation of those Jews that were saved by him more conspicuous. Though the greater part of the nation of the Jews was rejected, and the Gentiles called in their room, yet there were a great many thousands of the Jews that were saved by Christ after his resurrection. Acts xxi. 20. They being taken from so low a state under temporal calamity in their bondage to the Romans, and from a state of great superstition and wickedness, it made their redemption the more visibly glorious.--I have noticed this dispensation of providence in the gradual decline of the Jewish church in this place, because it began in the reign of Solomon.

15. I would here take notice of the additions that were made to the canon of Scripture, in or soon after the reign of Solomon; some of them by Solomon himself, who wrote the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, probably near the close of his reign. But his writing the Song of Songs, as it is called, is worthy of special observation. It is wholly on the subject that we are upon, viz. Christ and his redemption, representing the high and glorious relation, union and love, which is between Christ and his redeemed church.* And the history of the

* That Solomon composed many songs or poems is certain, from 1 Kings iv. 32.; and since the title of this book, which is confessedly very ancient, ascribes it to him, it seems very easy to believe, that as the book of Proverbs was compiled from his wise sayings, this book might be preserved as the most excellent of his songs. To Solomon, therefore, it has constantly been referred, and this opinion is very much strengthened from several passages in the Song itself. Chap. iii. 11. 'Go forth, and behold King Solomon.' viii. 12. 'My vineyard is before thee, oh Solomon!' Also several of the comparisons used, as the tent curtains of Solomon, and Pharaoh's chariot horses, would hardly have been used by a later Author.

Its early admission into the Jewish canon, and the constant veneration it has received in the Christian church, is a farther proof of its divine authority. Among the Hebrews it was ranked in the same class with Daniel and Ezekiel, and forbid to be read by their young men till they arrived at mature age, on account of its mysterious contents. The style of this book is also very similar to other passages of scrip-

scriptures seems, in Solomon's reign, and some of the next succeeding ones, to have been increased by the prophets Nathan, Ahijah, Shemaiah, and Iddo. It is probable that part of the history which we have in the first of Kings was written by them, by what is said in 2 Chron. ix. 29. xii. 15. xiii. 22.

16. God's upholding his church and religion through this period was truly wonderful, considering the proneness of that people to idolatry. When the ten tribes had generally and finally forsaken the worship of God, he kept up the true religion in the kingdom of Judah; and when they corrupted themselves, as they very often did exceedingly, and idolatry was ready totally to extinguish it, yet God kept the lamp alive, and was often pleased when things seemed to be come to an extremity, and religion at its last gasp, to grant blessed revivals by remarkable outpourings of his Spirit, particularly in Hezekiah's and Josiah's time.

17. God kept the book of the law from being lost in times of general and long continued neglect of and enmity against it. The most remarkable instance of this kind was the preservation of the book of the law in the time of the long apostasy of Manasseh, and then afterwards in the reign of Amos his son. Thus while the book of the law was so much neglected, and such a careless and profane management of the affairs of the temple prevailed, that the copy of the law, which used to be laid up by the side of the ark in the holy of holies, was lost for a long time. No body knew where it was, yet God preserved it from being finally lost. In Josiah's time, when they came to repair the temple, it was found buried in rubbish, after it had been lost so

ture, particularly Psalm xlv. and Isai. v., where many of the same images are employed. The poem is an entire allegory, and christian expositors are in general agreed, that it expresses the sublime and spiritual love which subsists between the Redeemer and his church; and the commentaries given by Bishop Lowth, Mr. Harmer, and others, have cast considerable light on this mysterious book.

long that Josiah himself seems to have been much a stranger to it till now. 2 Kings xxii. 8.

18. God's preserving the tribe of which Christ was to proceed, from being ruined through the many and great dangers of this period. The visible church of Christ from Solomon's reign was chiefly in the ten tribes of Judah. The tribe of Benjamin, which was annexed to them, was but very small, and that of Judah exceeding large; as Judah took Benjamin under his covert when he went into Egypt to bring corn, so the tribe of Benjamin seemed to be under the covert of Judah ever after. And though on occasion of Jeroboam's setting up the calves at Bethel and Dan, the levites resorted to Judah out of all the tribes of Israel, 2 Chron. xi. 13; yet they were also small, and not reckoned among the tribes; and though many of the ten tribes did also on that occasion, for the sake of the worship of God in the temple, leave their inheritances in their several tribes, and removed and settled in Judah, and so were incorporated with them, yet the tribe of Judah was so much the prevailing part, that they were all called by the name of Judah. Therefore God said to Solomon, 'I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son, for David my servant's sake and for Jerusalem's sake, which I have chosen.' So when the ten tribes were carried captive, it is said, there was none left but the tribe of Judah only: hence they were called Jews. 1 Kings xi. 13, 32, 36. 2 Kings xvii. 18.

This was the tribe of which Christ was to come; and of this chiefly did God's visible church consist, from Solomon's time: this was the people over whom the kings which were legal ancestors of Christ, and of the house of David reigned. The people were wonderfully preserved from destruction during this period, when they often seemed to be upon the brink of it, and just ready to be swallowed up. So it was in Rehoboam's time, when Shishak king of Egypt, came against Judah with such a vast

force ; yet then God manifestly preserved them from being destroyed. 2 Chron. xii. 2. So again in Abijah's time, when Jeroboam set the battle in array against him with eight hundred thousand chosen men ; a mighty army indeed ! 2 Chron. xiii. 3. Then God wrought deliverances for Judah, out of regard to the covenant of grace established with David, as is evident from ver. 4, 5. ; and the victory they obtained was because the Lord was on their side, ver. 12. Again in Asa's time, when Zerah the Ethiopian came against him with a yet larger army of a thousand thousand and three hundred chariots. 2 Chron. xiv. 9. On this occasion Asa cried to the Lord and trusted in him, being sensible that it was nothing with him to help those that had no power ; ver. 11. ' And Asa cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with those that have no power.' And accordingly God gave them a glorious victory over this mighty host.

So again it was in Jehoshaphat's time, when the children of Moab, of Ammon, and the inhabitants of Mount Seir, combined together against Judah with a mighty army, a force vastly superior to any that Jehoshaphat could raise ; who, with his people, was greatly afraid. Yet they set themselves to seek God on this occasion ; trusted in him, and were told by one of his prophets, that they need not fear, nor should they have any occasion to fight in this battle, but only to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Accordingly they only stood still, and sang praises to God, who made their enemies do the work themselves, by killing one another ; while the children of Judah had nothing to do, but to gather the spoil, which was more than they could carry away. 2 Chron. xx.

So it was in Ahaz's time, of which we have spoken already. Again in Hezekiah's, when Sennacherib, king of Assyria, the greatest monarchy that was then in the world, came up against all the fenced cities of Judah, after he had conquered most of the neigh-

bouring countries, and sent Rabshakeh, the captain of his host, against Jerusalem, who in a very proud and scornful manner insulted Hezekiah and his people, as being sure of victory ; and the people were trembling for fear, like lambs before a lion. Then God sent Isaiah the prophet to comfort them, and assure them that they should not prevail. In token of which he gave them this sign, that the earth, for two years successively, should bring forth food of itself, from the roots of the old stalks, without their plowing or sowing ; and then the third year they should sow and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them, and live on the fruit of their labours, as they were wont to do before. 2 Kings xix. 29. This is mentioned as a type of what is promised in ver. 30, 31. ‘ And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah, shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of Mount Zion : the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this.’ The corn’s springing again after it had been cut off with the sickle, and bringing forth another crop from roots that seemed to be dead, represents the church’s reviving again, as it were out of its own ashes, and flourishing like a plant after it had been cut down seemingly past recovery. When the enemies of the church have done their utmost, and seemed to have gained their point, and to have overthrown the church, so that the being of it is scarcely visible, yet there is a secret life in it that will cause it to flourish again, and to take root downward, and bear fruit upward. This was now fulfilled ; for the king of Assyria had already taken and carried away the ten tribes ; and Sennacherib had also taken all the fenced cities of Judah, and ranged the country round about. Jerusalem only remained, and Rabshakeh had in his own imagination already swallowed that up, as he had also in the fearful apprehensions of the Jews themselves. But God wrought a wonderful deliverance. He sent an angel, that in one night smote

a hundred fourscore and five thousand in the enemy's camp.

19. In the reign of Uzziah, and the following reigns, God was pleased to raise up a set of eminent prophets, who should commit their prophecies to writing, and leave them for the use of his church in all ages. We before observed, that God began a succession of prophets in Israel in Samuel's time; but none of them are supposed to have written books of prophecies till now. Several of them indeed wrote histories of the wonderful dispensations of God towards his church, as we have observed already of Samuel, Nathan, Gad, Ahijah, and Iddo. The history of Israel seems to have been farther carried on by Iddo and Shemaiah. 2 Chron. xii. 15. 'Now the acts of Rehoboam, first and last, are they not written in the book of Shemaiah the prophet, and Iddo the seer, concerning genealogies?' And after that, 'Jehu the son of Hanani, who is mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel.' 1 Kings xvi. 1—7. And then it was continued by the prophet Isaiah. 'Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, write.' 2 Chron xxvi. 22. He probably did it as well in the second book of Kings, as in the book of his prophecy; and the history was carried on and finished by other prophets after him. But now did God first raise up a set of great prophets, not only to write histories, but prophecies. The first of these is thought to be Hosea the son of Beeri, and therefore his prophecy, the word of the Lord by him, is called 'The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea;' that is, the first part of the written word of that kind. He prophesied in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel. There were many other witnesses, for God raised up about this time, to commit their prophecies to writing, Isaiah, Amos, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, and probably some others; and so

from that time forward God continued a succession of writing prophets.

This was a great advance in the affair of redemption, as will appear if we consider that the main business of the prophets was to point out Christ and his redemption. The great end of the spirit of prophecy being given them was, that they might give testimony to Christ; 'for the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy.' Rev. xix. 10. Hence we find that the main thing that most of the prophets in their writings insist upon is, Christ and his redemption, and the glorious times of the gospel which should be in the latter days; and though many other things were predicted by them, yet they seem to be only introductory to their prophecy of these things. Whatever they predict, here their prophecies commonly terminate.

These prophets wrote chiefly to prepare the way for the coming of Christ, and the glory that should follow. And in what an exalted strain do they all speak of those things! Other things they speak of as other men; but when they come upon this subject, what a heavenly sublimity is there in their language! Some of them are very particular and full in their predictions of these things, and above all, the prophet Isaiah, who is therefore deservedly called the evangelical prophet. He seems to teach the glorious doctrine of the gospel almost as plainly as the apostles, who preached after Christ was actually come. The apostle Paul therefore takes notice, that the prophet Esaias is 'very bold.' Rom. x. 20. That is, as the word is used in the New Testament, 'very plain.' Thus 2 Cor. iii. 12: 'we use great plainness of speech,' or 'boldness,' as it is in the margin. How plainly and fully does the prophet Isaiah describe the manner and circumstances, the nature and end, of the sufferings and sacrifice of Christ, in the third chapter of his prophecy. There is scarcely a chapter in the New Testament itself more full of it. And how much, and in what a strain, does the same

prophet speak from time to time of the glorious benefits of Christ, the unspeakable blessings which shall redound to his church through his redemption. Jesus Christ, the person of whom the prophet speaks, once appeared to Isaiah in human form, the nature that he should afterwards take upon him. Ch. vi. 1. 'I saw also the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.' It was Christ that Isaiah now saw, as we are expressly told in the New Testament. John xii. 39 ---41.

If we consider the abundant prophecies of this and the other prophets, what a great increase was there of the light of the gospel. How plentiful are the revelations and prophecies of Christ now, to what they were in the first period of the Old Testament, from Adam to Noah; or in the second, from Noah to Abraham; or to what they were before Moses, or in the time of Moses, Joshua and the Judges. Great part of the Old Testament was written now from the days of Uzziah to the captivity into Babylon; and how excellent are those portions of it! What a precious treasure have those prophets committed to the church of God, tending greatly to confirm the gospel of Christ; and which has been of great comfort and benefit to God's church in all ages since, and doubtless will be to the end of the world.



VI. FROM THE BABYLONISH CAPTIVITY TO THE COMING OF CHRIST.

I COME now to the last period of the Old Testament, viz. that which begins with the Babylonish captivity, and extends to the coming of Christ, being the greatest part of six hundred years, to show how the work of redemption was carried on through this time.---But before I enter upon particulars, I would

observe three things wherein this is distinguished from the preceding.

1. Though we have no account of a great part of this period in scripture history, yet the events of it are more the subject of prophecy, than any of the preceding. There are two ways wherein the scriptures give account of the events by which the work of redemption is carried on, viz. history and prophecy; and in one or the other of these ways, we have an account how the work of redemption is carried on from the beginning. Although the scriptures are not a proper history of the whole, yet therein is contained the chain of all the great events by which this affair hath been carried on from the fall to the end of the world, either in history or prophecy. And it is to be observed, that where the scripture is wanting in one of these ways, it is made up in the other. Where scripture history fails, there prophecy takes place; so that the account is still carried on, and the chain is not broken, till we come to the very last link of it in the consummation of all things.

Accordingly it is observable of the period or space of time that we are upon, that though it is so much less the subject of scripture history, than most of the preceding, so that there is above four hundred years of which the scripture gives us no history, yet the events of this period are more the subject of prophecy than all the preceding put together. Most of those remarkable prophecies of the book of Daniel, also most of those in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, against Babylon, Tyrus, Egypt, and many other nations, were fulfilled in this period.

Thus the reason why the scriptures give us no history of so great a part of this period, is not because the events of this period were not so important, or less worthy to be taken notice of than the events of the foregoing; but there are several other reasons which may be given of it. One is, that it was the will of God that the Spirit of prophecy

should cease in this period, for reasons that may be given hereafter; so that there were no prophets to write the history of these times; and therefore God designing this, took care that the great events of this period should not be without mention in his word. It is observable, that the set of writing prophets that God raised up in Israel, were raised up at the latter end of the foregoing period, and at the beginning of this; which it is likely was partly because the time was now approaching, of which, the spirit of prophecy having ceased, there was to be no scripture history, and therefore no other scripture account than what was given in prophecy.

Another reason that may be given why there was so great a part of this period left without an historical account in scripture is, that God in his providence took care that there should be authentic and full accounts of this period preserved in profane history. It is remarkable, that with respect to the events of the five preceding periods, of which the scriptures give the history, profane history gives us no account, or at least of but very few of them. There are many fabulous and uncertain accounts of things that happened before; but the beginning of the times of authentic profane history is judged to be but little more than a hundred years before Nebuchadnezzar's time. The learned men among the Greeks and Romans used to call the ages before that the fabulous age; but the times after that they called the historical age. And from about that time to the coming of Christ, we have undoubted accounts in profane history of the principal events; accounts that wonderfully agree with the many prophecies that we have in scripture of those times.

Thus did the great God, who disposes all things, take care to give an historical account of things from the beginning of the world, through all those former ages which profane history does not reach, and ceased not till he came to those later ages in which profane history related things with some cer-

tainty: and concerning those times, he gives us abundant account in prophecy, that by comparing profane history with those prophecies, we might see their agreement.

2. This being the last period of the Old Testament, and the next to the coming of Christ, seems to have been remarkably distinguished from all others in the great revolutions that were among the nations of the earth, to make way for his kingdom. The time now drawing nigh, wherein Christ, the great King and Saviour of the world, was to come, great and mighty were the changes that were brought to pass in order to it. The way had been preparing for his coming, from the fall of man, through all the foregoing periods; but now the time drawing nigh, things began to ripen apace, and divine providence wrought wonderfully now. The greatest revolutions that any history whatsoever gives an account of, fell out in this period. Almost all the then known world, all the nations that were round about the land of Canaan, far and near, that were within the reach of their knowledge, were overturned again and again. All lands were in turns subdued, captivated, and as it were, emptied, and turned upside down, and that most of them repeatedly, in this period; agreeable to that prophecy. 'Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty; he maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.' Isai. xxiv. 1

This emptying, and turning upside down, began with God's visible church, in their captivity by the king of Babylon. And then the cup from them went round to all other nations, agreeable to what God revealed to the prophet Jeremiah. (xxv. 15---27.) Here special respect seems to be had to the great revolutions that there were on the face of the earth in the times of the Babylonish empire. But after that, there were three general overturnings of the world before Christ came, in the succession of the three great monarchies of the world that arose after the Babylonish empire. The king of Babylon is

represented in scripture as overturning the world ; but after that the Babylonish empire was overthrown by Cyrus, who founded the Persian empire in the room of it ; which was of much greater extent than the Babylonish empire in its greatest glory. Thus the world was overturned the second time. Then, after that, the Persian empire was overthrown by Alexander, and the Grecian set up upon the ruins of it ; which was still of much greater extent than the Persian. Thus there was a general overturning of the world a third time. At last the Grecian empire was overthrown by the Romans, and the Roman empire established in its stead ; and this far exceeded all the foregoing monarchies in power and extent of dominion. And so the world was overturned the fourth time.

These several monarchies, and the great revolutions of the world under them, are abundantly spoken of in the prophecies of Daniel. They are represented in Nebuchadnezzar's image of gold, silver, brass, and iron, and Daniel's interpretation of it in the second chapter ; and the vision of the four beasts, and the angel's interpretation of it in chap. vii. The succession of the Persian and Grecian monarchies is more particularly represented in the viith chapter, in the vision of the ram and the he-goat, and again in chapter xi.

Besides these four general overturnings, the world was kept meanwhile in a constant tumult and state of convulsion, through this whole period till Christ came. Before this, the face of the earth was comparatively in quietness ; though there were many great wars, yet we read of no such mighty and universal convulsions as there were in this period. Most of the nations of the world had long remained on their lees, as it were, without being emptied from vessel to vessel, as is said of Moab. Jer. xlvi. 11. Now these great overturnings were because the time of the great Messiah drew nigh. Ezek. xxi. 27. 'I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is, and I will

give it him.' The prophet, by repeating the word 'overturn' three times, has respect to three overturnings, as in Rev. viii. 13. The repetition of the word 'woe' three times, signifies three distinct woes; as appears by what follows. 'One woe is past;' and again, 'the second woe is past, and behold the third woe cometh quickly.' Rev. ix. 12---14.

It must be noted, that Ezekiel prophesied in the time of the Babylonish captivity; and therefore there were three great and general overturnings of the world to come after this prophecy, before Christ came. The first by the Persians, the second by the Grecians, the third by the Romans; and then after that, Christ, whose right it was to take the diadem and reign, should come. Here these great revolutions are evidently spoken of as preparatory to the coming and kingdom of Christ. But to understand the words right, we must note the particular expression. 'I will overturn, overturn, overturn it,' i. e. the diadem and crown of Israel, or the supreme temporal dominion over God's visible people. This God said should be no more; the crown should be taken off, and the diadem removed, as it is said in the foregoing verse. The supreme power over Israel should be no more in the royal line of David, to which it properly belonged, but should be removed away, and given to others, and overturned from one to another. First the supreme power over Israel should be in the hands of the Persians; then it should be overturned again, and come into the hands of the Grecians; and then it should be overturned again, and come into the hands of the Romans, and should be no more in the line of David, till that very person should come, who was the son of David, whose proper right it was, and to whom God would give it.*

* The sceptre was not to *depart* until Shiloh came; here we see the crown was to be taken away, and not *restored* till the Messiah's coming. These assertions may appear at first sight inconsistent; but are to be reconciled by a very obvious distinction between the *sceptre* of the tribe,

That those great revolutions were all to prepare the way for Christ's coming, and erecting his kingdom in the world, is farther manifest by Haggai ii. 6, 7. 'For thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Yet once it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land: and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts.' See also ver. 21---23. It is evident that these commotions, whereby the thrones of kingdoms and armies were overthrown, and every one came down by the sword of his brother, were to prepare the way for the coming of him who is 'the desire of all nations.'

The great changes and troubles that have sometimes been in the visible church, are compared to the church's being in travail to bring forth Christ. Rev. xii. 2. So these great troubles and mighty revolutions before Christ was born, were like the world's being in travail to bring forth the Son of God. The apostle, in the viiith of Romans, represents the whole creation as groaning and travailling in pain together until now, to bring forth the liberty and manifestation of the children of God. The world being kept so long in a state of war and bloodshed, prepared the way for the coming of the Prince of peace, as it showed the great need there was of such a prince.

It pleased God to order it in his providence, that earthly power and dominion should be raised to its greatest height, and appear in its utmost glory, in those four great monarchies that succeeded one another, and that every one should be greater and more glorious than the preceding, before he set up

and the *diadem* of the kingdom. It is certain, that long before Christ's incarnation the Jews became subject to the heathen empires, and yet were not wholly stript of temporal power till afterwards. They preserved a form of civil, as well as ecclesiastical government of their own; yet were in a state of vassalage and subjection to other crowns. In a word, they had a power, but not the *supreme* power, among themselves. This makes the accomplishment of these prophecies much more remarkable.

the kingdom of his Son. By this it appeared how much his spiritual kingdom exceeded the most glorious temporal ones. The strength and glory of Satan's kingdom in these four mighty monarchies, appeared in its greatest height : for those were the monarchies of the heathen world, and so the strength of them was the strength of Satan's kingdom. God suffered the latter to rise to so great a height of power and magnificence before his Son came to overthrow it, to prepare the way for his more glorious triumph. Goliath must have on all his armour when the stripling David comes against him with a sling and a stone, for the greater glory of David's victory. God suffered one of those great monarchies to subdue another, and erect itself on the other's ruins, appearing still in greater strength, and the last to be the strongest and mightiest of all ; that so Christ, in overthrowing that, might, as it were, overthrow them all at once ; as the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, is represented as destroying the whole image, the gold, the silver, the brass, the iron, and the clay ; so that all became as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor.

These mighty empires were suffered thus to convulse the world, and destroy one another : and though their power was so great, yet they could not uphold themselves, but fell one after another, and came to nothing, even the last of them, which was the strongest, and had swallowed up the earth. It pleased God thus to show in them the instability and vanity of all earthly power and greatness ; which served as a foil to set forth the glory of the kingdom of his Son, which never shall be destroyed, Dan. ii. 44. ' In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed : and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.' So greatly does this differ from all those kingdoms : they vanish away, and are left to other people, but this shall stand for ever. God suffered the devil to

do his utmost, and to establish his interest, by setting up the greatest, strongest, and most glorious kingdoms in the world, before the despised Jesus overthrew him in his empire. Christ came into the world to bring down the high things of Satan's kingdom, that the hand of the Lord might be on every one that is proud and lofty, and every high tower, and every lofty mountain. Isai. ii. 12. And therefore these things were suffered to rise very high, that Christ might appear so much the more glorious in being above them.—Thus wonderfully did the great and wise Governor of the world prepare the way for the erection of the glorious kingdom of his beloved Son Jesus.

3. Another thing for which this last period or space of time before Christ was particularly remarkable, was the wonderful preservation of the church through all these overturnings. This was, on some accounts, more remarkable through this period, than through any of the foregoing. It was very wonderful that the church, which now was so weak, and in so low a state, and mostly subject to the dominion of heathen monarchies, should be preserved for five or six hundred years together, while the world was so often overturned, and the earth was rent in pieces, and made so often empty and waste, and the inhabitants of it came down so often every one by the sword of his brother. I say it was wonderful that the church in its weak and low state, being but a little handful of men, should be preserved in all these great convulsions; especially considering that the land of Judea, the chief place of the church's residence, lay in the midst of them, as it were in the centre of the contending parties, and was very much the seat of war amongst them, and was often overrun and subdued, and sometimes in the hands of one people, and sometimes another, and very much the object of the envy and hatred of all heathen nations, and often almost ruined by them, great multitudes of its inhabitants being slain, and the land in a great measure depopulated; and those

who had them in their power, often intended the utter destruction of the whole nation. Yet they were upheld; they were preserved in their captivity in Babylon, and they were upheld again under all the dangers they passed through, under the kings of Persiã, and the much greater dangers they were liable to under the empire of the Greeks, and afterwards when the world was trodden down by the Romans.

Their preservation through this period was also peculiarly remarkable, in that we never read of the church's suffering persecution in any former period, to such a degree as they did in this, under Antiochus Epiphanes, of which more afterwards. This wonderful preservation of the church through all these overturnings of the world, gives light and confirmation to what we read in the xlvith psalm. 'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar, and be troubled; though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.'

Thus I have taken notice of some general things wherein this last period of the Old-Testament times was distinguished. I come now to consider how the work of redemption was carried on in particulars.

1. The first thing that here offers is the captivity of the Jews in Babylon. This was a great dispensation of providence, such as never was before. The children of Israel in the time of the judges, had often been brought under their enemies; and many particular persons were carried captive at other times. But never had there been any such thing as destroying the whole land, the sanctuary, and the city of Jerusalem, and all the cities and villages of the land, and carrying the whole body of the people out of their own land into a country many hundred miles distant, and leaving the land of Canaan empty

of God's visible people. The ark had once forsaken the tabernacle of Shiloh, and was carried captive into the land of the Philistines : but never had there been any such thing as the burning of the sanctuary, and utterly destroying the ark, and carrying away all the sacred vessels and utensils, and breaking up all their stated worship in the land, and the land's lying waste and empty for so many years together. How lively are those things set forth in the Lamentations of Jeremiah.*--The work of redemption was promoted by this remarkable dispensation in these following ways.

(1) It finally cured that nation of their idolatry. The prophet Isaiah, speaking of the setting up of the kingdom of Christ, says, 'the idols he shall utterly abolish.' When the time was drawing near, that God would abolish heathen idolatry through the greater part of the known world, it pleased him first to abolish heathenism among his own people, by their captivity in Babylon. They who were so addicted to idolatry for so many ages, and not reformed by all the reproofs, warnings, corrections, and judgments inflicted on them for it, were now finally cured ; so that however some might fall into this sin afterwards, as they did about the time of Antiochus's persecution, yet as a nation they never showed any hankering after this sin any more. This was a remarkable and wonderful change in that people, and what directly promoted the work of redemption, as it was a great advancement of the interest of true religion.

(2) It was one thing that prepared the way for

* There is nothing in all the tragedians, that is equally moving and tender with the Lamentations of the prophet Jeremiah---' Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes fountains of tears !---Oh all ye that pass by, behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow !' The composition is a piece of superlative beauty, and comprises all the eloquence of mourning. ' Did we ever find (says an eloquent author) sorrow flowing in such a natural prevailing pathos ? One would think that every letter was written with a tear ; every word was the noise of a breaking heart ; that the author was a man made up of sorrows, disciplined to grief from his infancy ; one who never breathed but in sighs, nor spoke but in a groan.'

Christ's coming, and setting up the glorious dispensation of the gospel, as it took away many of those things, wherein consisted the glory of the Jewish dispensation. First, it removed the temporal diadem of the house of David, or the supreme and independent government of themselves. The time now approaching, when Christ, the great and everlasting King of his church, was to reign, it was time for the typical kings to withdraw. The Jews henceforward were always dependent on other nations, until Christ came, for near six hundred years, except about ninety under the Maccabees and their posterity, during which space they maintained a sort of independence by continual wars.

By the captivity also, the glory and magnificence of the temple was taken away, and the temple that was built afterwards was nothing in comparison with it. Thus it was meet, when the time drew nigh that the glorious antitype of the temple should appear. They also lost by the captivity the two tables of the testimony delivered to Moses, on which God with his own finger wrote the ten commandments on Mount Sinai. These seem to have been preserved in the ark till the captivity, and were there when Solomon placed the ark in the temple. 1 Kings viii. 9. 'There was nothing in the ark, save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb.'

Another thing that the Jews now lost, was the Urim and Thummim. Ezra ii. 63. 'And the Tirshatha said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there should stand up a priest with Urim and Thummim.' And we have no account that this was ever restored; but the ancient writings of the Jews say the contrary. What this Urim and Thummim was I shall not now inquire; but only observe, that it was something by which the high priest inquired of God, and received immediate answers from him, or by which God gave forth immediate oracles on particular occasions. This was now withdrawn, the time approaching when Christ, the antitype of the Urim and Thum-

min, the great word and oracle of God, was to come.*

Another thing that the ancient Jews say was wanting in the second temple, was the Shechinah, or cloud of glory over the mercy seat. This was promised to be in the tabernacle, Levit. xvi. 2. 'For I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat.' And we read of the cloud of glory descending into the tabernacle, Exod. xl. 35; and so likewise with respect to Solomon's temple. But we have no account that this cloud of glory was in the second temple; and the ancient accounts of the Jews say, that there was no such thing there. This, indeed, was needless in the second temple, considering that God had promised to fill it with glory another way, viz. by Christ's coming into it; which was afterwards fulfilled. 'I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts.' Hag. ii. 7.

The Jews in their ancient writings mention another thing as being now withdrawn, and that was the fire from heaven on the altar. When Moses built the tabernacle and altar in the wilderness, and the first sacrifices were offered on it, fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt-offering. Lev. ix. 24. And again, when Solomon built the temple

* Most christian writers take the Urim and Thummim to mean the precious stones in the breastplate of the high priest; but the rabbins will have it that the ineffable name (Jehovah) was inserted between the folds, not by the workmen, as the stones were, but by Moses himself under divine direction. Exod. xxviii.

The answer of this oracle must either have been collected by the peculiar radiancy of certain letters of the names of the tribes engraved on these stones; or rather be delivered by a voice from the Sheccinah, as at other times. Num. vii. 8, 9. 1 Sam. xxlii. 11, 12. xxx. 8. 2 Sam. ii. 1. All are agreed that this method was only lawful for the most eminent persons, and on the most important occasions. The Jews add that it was never used after the building of Solomon's temple; and give this reason, that the tribes were soon after divided, and it could only be lawfully consulted in cases in which they were all concerned.

If the answer was given by a voice from the most holy, then the only use of the breastplate seems to have been as a memorial of the twelve tribes before God, herein typifying him who bears all the names of his chosen people on his heart, and thus constantly appears in the presence of God for us.

and offered the first sacrifices. 2 Chron. vii. 1. This fire was never to go out, but with the greatest care to be kept alive. Lev. vi. 13. 'The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out.' And there is no reason to suppose the fire in Solomon's time ever went out till the temple was destroyed by the Babylonians; but then it was extinguished, and never restored. And the Jews, after their return, were forced to make use of their common fire instead of it, according to the ancient tradition of the Jews. Thus the lights of the Old Testament go out on the approach of the glorious Sun of righteousness.

(3) The captivity in Babylon was the occasion of another thing, which afterwards promoted the setting up of Christ's kingdom in the world, viz. the dispersion of the Jews through the greater part of the known world, for the whole nation being carried far out of their own land, and continuing in a state of captivity for so long a time, they got them possessions, built houses, and settled themselves in the land of their captivity, agreeable to the direction that Jeremiah gave in the letter he wrote to them, chap. xxix; and therefore, when Cyrus gave them liberty to return to the land where they had formerly dwelt, many of them never returned. They were not willing to leave their settlements and possessions there to go into a desolate country, many hundred miles distant, which none but the old men among them had ever seen; and therefore they were but few, but a small number that returned. Great numbers tarried behind, though they still retained the same religion with those that returned, so far as it could be practised in a foreign land. Those messengers that came to inquire of the priests and prophets in Jerusalem, Sherezer, and Regem-melech, are supposed to have been sent from the Jews that remained still in Babylon. Zech. vii.

Those Jews that remained still in that country were by the great changes that happened in the world, soon dispersed thence into all the adjacent

countries. Hence we find, that in Esther's time, which was after the return from the captivity, the Jews were dispersed throughout all the vast empire of Persia, which extended from India to Ethiopia. Esther iii. 8. 'And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad, and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom.' And so they continued dispersed till Christ came, and till the apostles went forth to preach the gospel. But yet these dispersed Jews retained their religion in this dispersion. Their captivity, as I said before, thoroughly cured them of their idolatry; and it was their manner, for as many of them as could from time to time, to go up to the land of Judea to Jerusalem at their festivals. Hence we read, that at the time of the great feast of Pentecost, there were Jews then at Jerusalem out of every nation under heaven. These were come up from all countries whither they had been dispersed, to worship at that feast. And hence we find, in the history of the Acts, that wherever the apostles went preaching through the world, they found Jews.

Antiochus the Great, about two hundred years before Christ, on a certain occasion, transplanted two thousand families of Jews from the country about Babylon into Lesser Asia; and so they and their posterity, many of them, settled in Pontus, Galatia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, and in Ephesus; and from thence settled in Athens, and Corinth, and Rome. Hence the synagogues in those places where the apostle Paul preached.—This dispersion of the Jews through the world before Christ came, did many ways prepare the way for his coming, and setting up his kingdom in the world.

It was the means of raising a general expectation of the Messiah through the world, about the time that he actually came. For the Jews, wherever they were dispersed, carried the holy scriptures with them, and so the prophecies of the Messiah; and being conversant with the nations among whom they

lived, they by that means became acquainted with these prophecies, and with the expectations of the Jews, of their glorious Messiah; and hence also the birth of such a glorious person in Judea about that time began to be the general expectation of the nations of the world, as appears by the writings of the learned men of the heathen that lived about that time, which are still extant. Virgil, the famous poet that lived in Italy a little before Christ was born, has a poem about the expectation of a great prince that was to appear, and the happy times of righteousness and peace that he was to introduce; some of it very like the language of the prophet Isaiah.*

Another way that this dispersed state of the Jews prepared the way for Christ was, that it showed the necessity of abolishing the Jewish dispensation, and of introducing the new one of the covenant of grace. It showed the necessity of abolishing the ceremonial law, and the old Jewish worship; for by this means the observance of that ceremonial law became impracticable even by the Jews themselves.

* The following is Dryden's translation of the most celebrated lines in the pastoral of Virgil alluded to, except that the words in italics are inserted to render it more literal.

*The virgin now returns, Saturnian times
Roll round again.*

The base, degenerate iron offspring ends,
A golden progeny from heaven descends.
Thou ev'ry banish'd virtue shalt restore,
And crimes shall *terrify* the world no more.

The jarring nations He in peace shall bind,
And with paternal virtues rule mankind.
Unbidden earth shall wreathing ivy bring,
And fragrant herbs (the promises of spring)
As her first offerings to her infant King.
The goats with strutting dugs shall homeward speed,
And lowing herds secure *with lions* feed.
His cradle shall with rising flowers be crown'd;
The serpent's brood shall die; the sacred ground
Shall refuse to bear.
Unlabour'd harvests shall the fields adorn,
And cluster'd grapes shall blush on ev'ry thorn;
The knotted oaks shall showers of honey weep.
Oh, Son of mighty Jove! from heaven appear;
Come to thine honours—lo, the time draws near!
The barren hills proclaim the Deity;
A God! a God! the vocal rocks reply.

The ceremonial law was adapted to the state of a people dwelling together in the same land, where was the city that God had chosen ; where was the temple, the only place where they might offer sacrifices ; where it was lawful for their priests and levites to officiate ; where they were to bring their first fruits, and where their cities of refuge were, and the like. But many of the Jews by this dispersion lived in other lands, more than a thousand miles distant, when Christ came ; which made the observance of their laws of sacrifices, and the like, impracticable. And though their forefathers might be to blame in not going up to the land of Judea when they were permitted by Cyrus, yet the case was now, as to many of them at least, become impracticable. This showed the necessity of introducing a new dispensation, that should be fitted, not only to one particular land, but to the general circumstances and use of all nations.

Again, another way that this dispersion of the Jews became preparatory to the setting up of the kingdom of Christ in the world was, that it contributed to the making the facts concerning Jesus Christ publicly known through the world. For, as I observed before, the Jews that lived in other countries, used frequently to go up to Jerusalem at their three great feasts, which were from year to year ; and by this means they could not but become acquainted with the news of the wonderful things that Christ did in that land. We find that they were present at, and took great notice of, that great miracle of raising Lazarus, which excited the curiosity of those foreign Jews that came up to the feast of the passover to see Jesus. John xii. 20, 21. These Greeks were foreign Jews and proselytes, as is evident by their coming to worship at the feast of the passover. The Jews that lived abroad among the Greeks, and spoke their language, were called Greeks, or Hellenists ; so they are called Grecians. Acts vi. 1. These Grecians here spoken of were

not gentile christians ; for this was before the calling of the gentiles.

By the same means, the Jews that came up from other countries became acquainted with Christ's crucifixion. Thus the disciples, going to Emmaus, say to Christ, when they did not know him, ' Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which have come to pass there in these days ? ' Luke xxiv. 18. Plainly intimating, that the things concerning Jesus were so publicly known to all men, that it was wonderful to find any one unacquainted with them. So afterwards they became acquainted with the news of his resurrection ; and when they went home again into their own countries, they carried the news with them, and so made the facts public through the world, as they had made the prophecies of them public before.

After this, those foreign Jews that came to Jerusalem, took great notice of the pouring out of the Spirit at Pentecost, and the wonderful effects of it ; and many of them were converted by it, viz. Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Egypt, and the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and the strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians. Thus they not only carried back the news of the facts of christianity, but christianity itself, into their own countries with them ; which contributed much to the spreading of it through the world.

Another way that the dispersion of the Jews contributed to the setting up of the gospel kingdom in the world was, that it opened a door for the introduction of the apostles in all places where they came to preach the gospel. Almost in all places where they preached the truth, they found synagogues of the Jews, where the holy scriptures were usually read, and the true God worshipped ; which was a great advantage to the apostles in spreading the gospel. For their way was, into whatever city they

came, first to go into the synagogue of the Jews, they being people of the same nation, and there to preach the gospel. Hereby their coming, and their new doctrine, was taken notice of by their Gentile neighbours, whose curiosity excited them to hear what they had to say; which became a fair occasion to the apostles to preach the gospel to them. It appears that it was thus, by the account we have in the Acts of the Apostles. And many of these Gentiles having been before prepared in some measure, by the knowledge they had of the Jew's religion, and of their worship of one God, and of their prophecies, and expectations of a Messiah; which knowledge they derived from the Jews, who had long been their neighbours; this opened the door for the gospel to have access to them. And the work of the apostles with them was doubtless much easier than if they never had any expectation of such a person as the apostles preached, or heard about the worship of one only true God. So many ways did the Babylonish captivity greatly prepare the way for Christ's coming.

2. The next particular that I would take notice of is, the addition made to the canon of scripture in the time of the captivity, in those two remarkable portions of scripture, the prophecies of Ezekiel and Daniel. Christ appeared to each of these prophets in the form of that nature which he was afterwards to take upon him. The prophet Ezekiel gives an account of his thus appearing to him repeatedly. Chap. i. 26: 'And above the firmament that was over their heads, was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone, and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.' Also chap. viii. 1, 2. So Christ appeared to the prophet Daniel, chap. viii. 15, 16: 'There stood before me as the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision.' Several

things make it evident that this was Christ, which I cannot now mention particularly. So Christ appeared again as a man to this prophet, chap. x. 5, 6: 'Then I lift up mine eyes and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz. His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire; and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.' Comparing this vision with that of the apostle John, Rev. i. 13, makes it manifest that it was Christ. And the prophet Daniel, in the historical part of his book, gives an account of a very remarkable appearance of Christ in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. 'Lo I see four men loose, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.' Dan. iii. 25.

Christ not only appeared here in the form of human nature, but he appeared in a furnace, saving those persons who believed on him from that furnace; by which is represented to us, how Christ, by coming himself into the furnace of God's wrath, saves those from it who believe in him; and the wrath of God never reaches or touches them, so much as to singe the hair of their head.

These two prophets, in many respects, were more particular concerning the coming of Christ, and his glorious gospel kingdom, than any of the prophets had been before. They both of them mention those three great revolutions of the world that should precede his coming. Ezekiel is particular in several places concerning the coming of Christ. The prophet Daniel is more so in foretelling the time of his coming, than any prophet had been before. In the ninth chapter of his prophecy; he foretold that it should be seventy weeks, or seventy weeks of years, or seventy times seven; that is, four hundred and ninety years, from the decree to rebuild and restore the state of the Jews, till the Messiah should be

crucified ; which must be reckoned from the commission given to Ezra by Artaxerxes,* whereby the very time of Christ's crucifixion was pointed out, which never had been before. Ezra. vii.

The prophet Ezekiel is very particular in the mystical description of the gospel church, in his account of his vision of the temple and city, in the latter part of his prophecy. The prophet Daniel points out the order of particular events that should come to pass relating to the christian church after Christ was come, as the rise of antichrist, and the continuance of his reign, and his fall, and the glory that should follow.--Thus does gospel light still increase, the nearer we come to the time of Christ's birth.

3. The next particular I would mention is, the destruction of Babylon, and the overthrow of the Chaldean empire by Cyrus. The destruction of Babylon was on that night in which Belshazzar the king, and the city in general, was drowned in a

* The decree given in the year 457 before the Christian era, from thence to the year A. D. 33, when Christ was crucified, was 490 years. The text says, 'seventy weeks (or weeks of years) are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up (complete and confirm) the vision and prophecy :--all which were accomplished in the death of Christ--' and to anoint the most holy.' By this may be intended the execution of his priestly office, in offering himself upon the cross, and afterwards entering into the immediate presence of God, as the high priest into the most holy place on the great day of atonement.

'Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, unto Messiah, the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks ; i. e. sixty-nine weeks ; or 483 years ; and these bring us to the time of our Lord's baptism.---' And the street shall be built again, and the wall ;' i. e. the Jewish state, civil and ecclesiastic, established, as well as Jerusalem itself rebuilt, in 'troublesome times.' This fills the first week, or forty-nine years. 'And (then) after (i. e. in the week after) threescore and two weeks,' from the first seven, 'shall Messiah be cut off,' by death, 'but not for himself. And the people of that prince shall come,' namely, Titus, 'and shall destroy the city and the sanctuary and the end thereof shall be with a flood ; and unto the end of the war, desolations are determined.' This refers to the destruction of Jerusalem, of which in its proper place.

'And he (Messiah) shall confirm the covenant with many for (or in) one week, and in the midst (or in the course) of the week,' namely, the seventieth and last, 'he shall cause the sacrifice to cease,' by the greater sacrifice and richer oblation of himself.

drunken festival which they kept to their gods, when Daniel was called to read the hand writing on the wall ; and it was brought about in such a manner as wonderfully to show the hand of God, and remarkably to fulfil his word by his prophets, which I cannot now stand particularly to relate.* Now that great city, which had long been an enemy to the city of God, viz. Jerusalem, was destroyed, after it had stood from the first building of Babel, which was about seventeen hundred years. If the check that was put to the building of this city at its beginning, whereby they were prevented from carrying it to that extent and magnificence that they intended ; I say, if this promoted the work of redemption, as I have before shown it did, much more this destruction of it.

It was a remarkable instance of God's vengeance on the enemies of his redeemed church ; for he

* Rollin in his *Ancient History*, has collected and arranged the several prophecies which referred to this period, and shewn how exactly they were accomplished. The following is an abridgement of his observations—

1. God predicted the Jewish captivity in Babylon, and the time of its continuance to be seventy years. Jer. xxv. 11.

2. The causes of God's wrath against Babylon were, her pride—cruelty to the Jews—and sacrilegious impiety. Isai. xlvii. 6—11.

3. The decree pronounced. The calamities that were to fall upon her, utter and irreparable destruction. Psal. cxxxvii. 8, 9. Isai. xliii. xiv. Jer. li.

4. Cyrus called to destroy Babylon, and to deliver the Jews. Isai. xlv. 1—4.

5. God gives a signal to the commanders and to the troops to march against Babylon. Isai. xliii. 2—5. xxi. 2.

6. Particular circumstances relative to the siege and taking of Babylon. The army to consist of Medes and Persians. Isai. xxi. 2. Jer. li. 11.—The city to be attacked suddenly. Isai. xlvii. 11. Jer. l. 24.—Euphrates to be dried up. Jer. l. 38, 39. li. 36.—Babylon to be taken in the midst of rioting and debauchery. Jer. li. 39, 57.—The king seized with instant terror. Isai. xxi. 3, 4. Dan. v. 6.—That he should return to his debauchery. Isai. xxi. 5. Dan. v. 10.—That the Babylonish troops, which should be chiefly foreigners, should be scattered and flee home. Isai. xii. 4.—That the king should not be buried with his ancestors. Isai. xiv. 19, 20.—The slaughter of his children. Isai. xiv. 21, 22.

Every one of these circumstances was literally and minutely fulfilled ; one of the most remarkable of which was, that Cyrus contrived to render the Euphrates fordable, and by that means introduced his troops into the city, in a night of debauchery and riot, when through the providence of God the guards had neglected to shut the gates.

brought this destruction on Babylon for the injuries they did to his children, as is often set forth in the prophets. It also promoted the work of redemption, as thereby God's people that were held captive by them, were set at liberty to return to their own land to rebuild Jerusalem; and therefore Cyrus, who did it, is called God's shepherd. Isai. xlv. 1. And these are over and above those ways wherein the setting up and overthrowing the four monarchies of the world did promote the work of redemption, which have been before observed.

4. What next followed this was, the return of the Jews into their own land, and rebuilding the city and temple of Jerusalem. Cyrus, as soon as he had destroyed the Babylonish empire, and erected the Persian on its ruins, made a decree in favour of the Jews, that they might return to their own land, and rebuild their city and temple. This return of the Jews out of the Babylonish captivity is, next to the redemption out of Egypt, the most remarkable of all the Old Testament redemptions, and most insisted on in scripture, as a type of the great redemption of Jesus Christ. It was under the hand of one of the legal ancestors of Christ, viz. Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, whose Babylonish name was Sheshlibazzar. He was the governor of the Jews, and their leader in their first return out of captivity: and together with Joshua the son of Josedek the high priest, had the chief hand in rebuilding the temple. This redemption was brought about by the hand of Zerubbabel and Joshua the priest, as the redemption out of Egypt was brought about by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

The return out of the captivity was a remarkable dispensation of providence. It was remarkable, that the heart of a heathen prince, as Cyrus was, should be so inclined to favour such a design as he did, not only in giving the people liberty to return, and rebuild the city and temple, but in giving charge that they should be helped with silver and gold, and with beasts. Ezra i. 4. Afterwards God wonder-

fully inclined the heart of Darius to further the building of the house of God with his own tribute-money, and by commanding their bitter enemies, the Samaritans, who had been striving to hinder them, to furnish them with all that they needed in order to it, and to supply them day by day; making a decree, that whosoever failed of it, timber should be pulled down out of his house, and he hanged thereon, and his house made a dunghill. Ezra vi After this God inclined the heart of Artaxerxes, another king of Persia, to promote the work of preserving the state of the Jews, by his ample commission to Ezra, helping them abundantly with silver and gold of his own bounty, and offering more, as should be needful, out of the king's treasure house, and commanding his treasurers beyond the river Euphrates to give more, as should be needed; to a hundred talents of silver, and a hundred measures of wheat, and a hundred baths of wine, and a hundred baths of oil, and salt, without prescribing how much. He also gave leave to establish magistrates in the land, freed the priests from toll, tribute and custom, and other things, which rendered the decree and commission by Artaxerxes the most full and ample in the Jews favour of any that, at any time, had been given for the restoring of Jerusalem. Hence in Daniel's prophecy, this is called the decree for the restoring and building Jerusalem; and from hence the seventy weeks are dated.

Another favourable commission was afterwards granted by the king of Persia to Nehemiah, chap. ii. It was remarkable, that the hearts of heathen princes should be so inclined. It was the effect of His power, who hath the hearts of kings in his hands, and turneth them whithersoever he will; and it was a remarkable instance of his favour to his people.

Another circumstance attending this restitution of the state of the Jews to their own land was, that it was accomplished against so much opposition from their bitter and indefatigable enemies the

Samaritans, who for a long time together, with all the malice and craft they could exercise, opposed the Jews in this affair, and sought their destruction; one while by Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, Rehum, and Shimshai; and then by Tatnai, Shethar-boznai, and their companions, and afterwards by Sanballat and Tobiah, as we read in the book of Nehemiah, chap. iv. v.

We have showed before, how the settlement of the people in the land in Joshua's time promoted the work of redemption. On the same account does their restitution belong to the same work. The re-settlement of the Jews in the land of Canaan belongs to this work, as it was a necessary means of preserving the Jewish church and dispensation in being, till Christ should come. If it had not been for this restoration of the Jewish church, temple, and worship, the people had remained without any temple, and land of their own, that should be as it were their head-quarters, a place of worship, habitation, and resort. The whole constitution which God had done so much to establish, would have been in danger of utterly failing, long before that six hundred years had been out, which was from about the time of the captivity till Christ. And so all that preparation which God had been making for the coming of Christ, from the time of Abraham, would have been in vain. Now that very temple was built that God would fill with glory by Christ's coming into it, as the prophets Haggai and Zechariah told the Jews, to encourage them in building it.

5. The next particular I would observe is, the addition made to the canon of the scriptures soon after the captivity by the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, who were sent to encourage the people in their work of re-building the city and temple; and the main argument they make use of to that end, is the approach of the time of the coming of Christ. Haggai foretold, that Christ should be of Zerubbabel's posterity, chap. ii. 23. This seems to be one of the last and most particular revelations of the

descent of Christ, till the angel Gabriel was sent to reveal it to his mother Mary.

6. The next thing I would take notice of, was the pouring out of the Spirit of God that accompanied the ministry of Ezra the priest after the captivity. Presently after Ezra came up from Babylon, with the ample commission which Artaxerxes gave him, whence Daniel's seventy weeks began, he set himself to reform the vices and corruptions he found among the Jews: and his great success in it we have an account of in the tenth chapter of Ezra; so that there appeared a very general and great mourning in the congregation of Israel for their sins, which was accompanied with a solemn covenant that the people entered into with God, and followed with a great and general reformation. The people about the same time, with great zeal, earnestness and reverence, gathered themselves together to hear the word of God read by Ezra; and gave diligent attention, while Ezra and the other priests preached to them, by reading and expounding the law, and were greatly affected in the hearing of it. They wept when they heard the words of the law, and set themselves to observe it, and kept the feast of tabernacles, as the scriptures observe, after such a manner as it had not been kept since the days of Joshua the son of Nun. Neh. viii. After this, having separated themselves from all strangers, they solemnly observed a fast, by hearing the word of God, confessing their sins, and renewing their covenant with God; and manifested their sincerity in that transaction, by actually reforming many abuses in religion and morals.

It is observable, that it has been God's manner, in every new establishment of the state of his visible church, to give a remarkable outpouring of his Spirit. So it was on the first establishment of the church of the Jews at their coming into Canaan under Joshua, as has been observed; also in this second settlement of the church in the same land in the time of Ezra; and so it was on the first esta-

blishment of the Christian church after Christ's resurrection. God wisely and graciously laid the foundation of those establishments in a work of his holy Spirit, for the lasting benefit of the state of his church, thenceforward continued in those establishments. This pouring out of the Spirit of God was a final cure to that nation of that particular sin, which just before they especially run into, viz. intermarrying with the Gentiles; for however inclined to it they were before, they ever after shewed an aversion to it.

7. Ezra added to the canon of scripture. He wrote the book of Ezra, and he is supposed to have written the two books of Chronicles, at least to have compiled them, if he was not the author of the materials. That these books were written, compiled or completed, after the captivity, the things therein contained manifest; for the genealogies are brought down below the captivity. I Chron. iii. 17. We have there an account of the posterity of Jehoiachin for several successive generations. And there is mention in these books of this captivity into Babylon as of a thing past, and of things that were done on the return of the Jews after the captivity; as you may see in the ninth chapter. The chapter is mostly filled up with an account of things that came to pass after the captivity into Babylon, as you may see by comparing it with what is said in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. And that Ezra was the person that compiled these books, is probable by this, because they conclude with words that we know are the words of Ezra's history. The two last verses of the second book of Chronicles are the two first verses of the book of Ezra.

8. Ezra is supposed to have collected all the books of which the holy scriptures then consisted, and disposed them in their proper order. Ezra is often spoken of as a noted and eminent scribe of the law of God, and the canon of scripture in his time was manifestly under his special care; and the Jews, from the first accounts we have from them,

have always held, that the canon of scripture, so much of it as was then extant, was collected and orderly disposed and settled by Ezra; and that from him they have delivered it down in the order in which he disposed it, till Christ's time, when the christian church received it from them, and have delivered it down to our times. The truth of this is allowed as undoubted by divines in general.

9. The work of redemption was carried on and promoted in this period, by greatly multiplying the copies of the law, and appointing the constant public reading of them in all the cities of Israel in their synagogues. It is evident, that before the captivity there were but few of them. There was indeed the original, laid up beside the ark; and the kings were required to write out a copy of it for their own use, and it was commanded to be read to the whole congregation of Israel once every seventh year; but we have no account of any other stated public reading of the law before the captivity but this. It is manifest, by several things that might be mentioned, that copies of the law were then exceedingly rare; but after the captivity, the constant reading of it was set up in every synagogue throughout the land. First, they began with reading the law, and then they proceeded to establish the constant reading of the other books of the Old Testament. Lessons were read out of the Old Testament, both from the law and the other parts of the scripture then extant, in all the synagogues which were set up in every city and place where the Jews in any considerable number dwelt. Thus we find it was in Christ and the apostles' time. 'Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.' Acts xv. 21. This custom is universally supposed, both by Jews and Christians, to be begun by Ezra. There were, doubtless, public assemblies before the captivity. They used to assemble in the temple at their great feasts, and were directed, when they were at a loss about any thing in the law, to go to the priest for

instruction; and they used also to resort to the houses of the prophets. We read of synagogues in the land before, Psal. lxxiv. 8; but it is not supposed that they then had copies of the law for constant public reading and expounding through the land as afterwards. This was one great means of their being preserved from idolatry.

10. The next thing I would mention is, God's remarkably preserving the church and nation of the Jews, when they were in imminent danger of being universally destroyed by Haman, as may be seen in the history of the book of Esther.* This series of providences was very wonderful in preventing this destruction. Esther was doubtless born for this end, to be the instrument of this remarkable preservation.

11. After this the canon of scripture was farther enlarged in the books of Nehemiah and Esther; the one by Nehemiah himself; and whether the other was written by Nehemiah, or Mordecai, or Malachi, is not of importance for us to know, so long as it is one of those books that were always admitted and received as a part of their canon by the Jews, and was among those that the Jews called their scriptures in Christ's time, and such as was approved by him. For Christ does often, in his speeches to the Jews, manifestly approve and confirm those books, which amongst them went by the name of the scriptures, as might easily be shown, if there were time for it.†

12. After this the canon of the Old Testament was completed and sealed by Malachi. The manner of concluding this prophecy seems to imply, that they were to expect no more prophecies, nor any more written revelations from God, till Christ should come. For in the last chapter he prophesies of Christ's coming, ver. 2, 3. 'But unto you that

* The Jews esteemed this book in value next to the Pentateuch, and in memory of the Salvation herein recorded, keep the feast of Purim to this day.

† See John v. 39, 46. Luke xvi. 29.

fear my name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall. And he shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be as ashes under the soles of your feet, in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts.' Then we read in ver. 4, 'Remember ye the law of Moses my servant which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments,' i. e. Remember and improve what ye have; keep close to that written rule you have, as expecting no more additions to it till the Old Testament is over, and the Sun of righteousness shall at length arise.

13. Soon after this, the spirit of prophecy ceased among that people till the time of the New Testament. Thus the Old Testament lights, the stars of the long night, began quickly to hide their heads, the time of the Sun of righteousness now drawing nigh. We before observed how the kings of the house of David ceased before the true King and head of the church came; and how the cloud of glory withdrew, before Christ, the brightness of the Father's glory, appeared; and so as to several other things. And now at last the spirit of prophecy ceased. The time of the great Prophet of God was now so nigh, it was time for their typical prophets to be silent.

Having gone through with the time that we have any historical account of in the writings of the Old Testament, and the last thing that was mentioned, by which the work of redemption was promoted, namely, the ceasing of the spirit of prophecy, I shall proceed to show how the work of redemption was carried on through the remaining times that were before Christ. Here we have not that thread of scripture history to guide us which we have had hitherto; but we have these three things to direct us, viz. the prophecies of the Old Testament, human histories of those times, and some occasional men-

tion made of things which then happened, in the books of the New Testament. Therefore,

14. The next particular that I shall mention under this period, is the destruction of the Persian empire, and the setting up of the Grecian monarchy by Alexander. This came to pass about sixty or seventy years after the time that Malachi is supposed to have prophesied, and about three hundred and thirty years before Christ. This was the third overturning of the world that came to pass in this period, and was greater and more remarkable than either of the foregoing. It was very remarkable on account of the suddenness of that conquest of the world which Alexander made, and the greatness of the empire which he set up, which much exceeded all the foregoing in its extent.

This event is enlarged upon in the prophecies of Daniel. The Grecian empire is represented by the third kingdom of brass, in Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, chap. ii; and in his vision of the four beasts is intended by the third beast that was like a leopard, that had on his back four wings of a fowl, to represent the swiftness of its conquest, chap. vii. This is more particularly represented by the he-goat, chap. viii., 'that came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground,' to show how swiftly Alexander overran the world. The angel himself expressly interprets this he-goat to signify the king of Grecia, ver. 21. 'The rough goat is the king of Grecia; and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king,' i. e. Alexander himself.*

* 'The vislon of the Goat and of the Leopard.' A goat is very properly made the type of the Grecian or Macedonian empire, because their first king, going with a great multitude of Greeks to seek new habitations in Macedonia, was commanded by the oracle to take the goats for his guides to empire: and afterwards seeing a herd of goats flying from a violent storm, he followed them to Edessa, and there fixed his seat of empire, made the goats his ensigns or standards, and called the city *Ægeæ*, or the goat's town, and the people *Ægeada*, or the goat's people. To this may be added, that the city *Ægeæ* was the usual buryingplace of the Macedonian kings. It is also very remarkable, that Alexander's son by Roxana was named Alexander *Ægeus*, or

After Alexander had conquered the world, he soon died, and his dominion did not descend to his posterity, but four of his principal captains divided his empire between them, as it there follows. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, 'four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power;' so you may see in the eleventh chapter of Daniel. The angel, after fore-

the son of the goat; and some of Alexander's successors are represented in their coins with goat's horns. This 'he goat came from the west,' and Europe lies westward of Asia. He came 'on the face of the whole earth,' carrying every thing before him in all the three parts of the world then known. 'And he touched not the ground;' his marches were so swift and his conquests so rapid, that he might be said in a manner to fly over the ground without touching it. For the same reason the same empire in the former vision was likened to a Leopard, which is a swift, nimble animal; and to denote the greater quickness and impetuosity, to a leopard with four wings. 'And the goat had a notable horn between his eyes;' this horn, saith the angel, is the first king, or kingdom of the Greeks in Asia, which was erected by Alexander the Great, and continued for some years in his brother Phiilip and his two sons.

In verses 6, 7, we have an account of the Grecians overthrowing the Persian empire. 'And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power.' One can hardly read these words without having some image of Darius's army standing and guarding the river Granicus, and of Alexander on the other side with his forces plunging in, swimming across the stream, and rushing on the enemy with all the fire and fury that can be imagined. 'And I saw him come close unto the ram:' he had several close engagements with the king of Persia. 'And he was moved with choler against him,' for the cruelties which the Persians had exercised towards the Grecians; and for Darius's attempting to corrupt sometimes his soldiers to betray him, and sometimes his friends to destroy him; so that he would not listen to the most advantageous offers of peace. 'And he smote the ram, and brake his two horns:' he subdued Persia and Media with the other provinces and kingdoms of the Persian empire. Darius was seized in Media, and made a prisoner by some of his own traitor subjects, who not long after basely murdered him. 'And there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him;' he conquered wherever he came, routed all the forces, took all the cities and castles, and entirely subverted and ruined the Persian empire. 'And there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand;' not even his numerous armies could defend the king of Persia, though his forces in the battle of Issus amounted to 600,000 men, and in that of Arbela to ten or eleven hundred thousand, whereas the whole number of Alexander's was not more than 47,000 in either engagement. So true is the observation of the Psalmist, 'There is no king saved by the multitude of a host;' and especially when God hath decreed the fall of empires, then even the greatest must fall. The fortune of Alexander, of which so much hath been said, was nothing but the providence of God. [Bp. Newton on the Prophecies, vol. ii.]

telling of the Persian empire, then proceeds to foretel of Alexander, ver. 3. 'And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will.' And then he foretels, ver. 4, of the dividing of his kingdom between his four captains. 'And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others besides those.' Two of these four captains, whose kingdoms were next to Judea, the one had Egypt and the neighbouring countries on the south of Judea, and the other had Syria and the neighbouring countries north of Judea; and these two are those that are called the kings of the north and of the south, in the eleventh chapter of Daniel.*

Now this setting up of the Grecian empire greatly prepared the way for Christ's coming, and erecting his kingdom in the world. Besides these ways common to the other overturnings of the world in this period, that have been already mentioned, there is one peculiar to this revolution which I would notice, which remarkably promoted the work of redemp-

* The empire of the goat was in its full strength, when Alexander died of a fever at Babylon. He was succeeded in the throne by his natural brother Philip, and by his own two sons, Alexander and Hercules: but in the space of about fifteen years they were all murdered, and then the 'first horn' or kingdom was entirely 'broken.' The royal family being thus extinct, the governors of provinces, who had usurped the power, assumed the titles of kings; and by the defeat and death of Antigonus in the battle of Ipsus, they were reduced to four, who parted Alexander's dominions between them, and divided and settled them into four kingdoms. These four kingdoms are the 'four notable horns,' which came up in the room of the first great horn; and are the same as the four heads of the leopard in the former vision. 'Four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power;' they were to be kingdoms of Greeks, not of Alexander's own family, but only of his nation; and neither were they to be equal to him in power and dominion, as an empire united is certainly more powerful than the same empire divided, and the whole is greater than any of the parts. They were likewise to extend 'toward the four winds of heaven:' and in the partition of the empire, Cassander held Macedon, Greece, and the western parts, Lysimachus had Thrace, Bithynia, and the northern regions. Ptolemy possessed Egypt, and the southern countries; and Seleucus obtained Syria and the eastern provinces. [Bp. Newton on the Prophecies, vol. ii.]

tion ; and that was, that it made the Greek language common in the world. To have one common language understood and used through the greater part of the world, was a thing that greatly prepared the way for the setting up of Christ's kingdom. This gave advantage for spreading the gospel from one nation to another, and so through all nations, with vastly greater ease than if every nation had a distinct language, and did not understand any other. For though some of the first preachers of the gospel had the gift of tongues, so that they could preach in any language, yet all had not this particular gift ; and they that had, could not exercise it when they would, but only at special seasons, when the Spirit of God was pleased to inspire them in this way. And the church in different parts of the world, as the churches of Jerusalem, Antioch, Galatia, Corinth, and others, which were in countries distant one from another, could not have had that communication one with another, which we have an account of in the book of Acts, if they had had no common language. So it was before the Grecian empire was set up. But after this, many in all these countries well understood the same language, viz. the Greek ; which wonderfully opened the door for mutual communication between those churches, so far separated one from another. And again, the making the Greek language common through so great a part of the world, wonderfully made way for the setting up of the kingdom of Christ, because it was the language in which the New Testament was to be originally written. The apostles propagated the gospel through many scores of nations ; and if they could not have understood the bible any otherwise than as it was translated into so many languages, it would have rendered the spreading of the gospel vastly more difficult. But by the Greek language being made common to all, they all understood the New Testament of Jesus Christ in the language in which the apostles and evangelists originally wrote it : so that as soon as ever it was written by its original penmen,

it immediately lay open to the world in a language that was commonly understood.

15. The next thing I shall take notice of is, the translation of the scriptures of the Old Testament into the Greek language, which is commonly called the Septuagint, or the translation of the Seventy. This is supposed to have been made about fifty or sixty years after Alexander's conquering the world. This is the first translation that ever was made of the scriptures that we have any credible account of. The canon of the Old Testament had been completed by the prophet Malachi but about a hundred and twenty years before in its original; and hitherto the scriptures had remained locked up from all other nations but the Jews, in the Hebrew tongue, which was understood by no other nation. But now it was translated into the Greek language, which, as we observed before, was a language commonly understood by the nations of the world.

This translation of the Old Testament is still extant, and is commonly in the hands of learned men, who find it extremely useful. The Jews have many fables about the occasion and manner of this translation; but the truth of the case is supposed to be this, that multitudes of the Jews living in other parts of the world besides Judea, and being born and bred among the Greeks, the Greek became their common language, and they did not well understand the original Hebrew. Hence they procured the scriptures to be translated for their use into the Greek language: and so henceforward the Jews, in all countries except Judea, were wont in their synagogues to make use of this translation instead of the Hebrew.

This translation of the scriptures into a language commonly understood throughout the world, prepared the way for Christ's coming and setting up his kingdom, which was greatly promoted by it. For as the apostles went preaching through the world, they made great use of the scriptures of the Old Testament, and especially of the prophecies con-

cerning Christ contained in them. And by means of this translation, and by the Jews being scattered every where, they had the scriptures at hand in a language that was understood by the Gentiles: and they principally made use of this translation in their preachings and writings wherever they went, as is evident by this, that in all the quotations that are made out of the Old Testament in their writings, they are almost every where in the very words of the Septuagint, they being both written in the same language. This makes it evident that the apostles, in their preaching and writings, commonly made use of this translation. So this very translation was that which was principally used in Christian churches through most nations of the world for several hundred years after Christ.

16. The next thing is the wonderful preservation of the church when it was imminently threatened and persecuted under the Grecian empire. The first time they were threatened was by Alexander himself. When he was besieging the city of Tyre, sending to the Jews for assistance and supplies for his army, and they refusing, out of a conscientious regard to their oath to the king of Persia, he being a man of a very furious spirit, agreeable to the scripture-representation of the rough he-goat, marched against them, with a design to cut them off. But the priests going out to meet him in priestly garments, when he saw them, God wonderfully turned his heart to spare and favour them, much as he did the heart of Esau when he met Jacob. After this, one of the kings of Egypt, a successor of one of Alexander's four captains, entertained a design of destroying the nation of the Jews; but was remarkably and wonderfully prevented by a strong interposition of heaven for their preservation.

But the most wonderful preservation of them all in this period, was under the cruel persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, and successor of another of Alexander's four captains. The Jews were at that time subject to the power of Antiochus;

and he being enraged against them, long strove to his utmost to destroy them, and root them out; at least all of them that would not forsake their religion, and worship his idols. He in a great measure wasted the country, and depopulated the city of Jerusalem; profaned the temple, by setting up his idols in some parts of it, and persecuted the people with insatiable cruelty; so that we have no account of any persecution like this before. Many of the particular circumstances of this persecution would be very affecting, if I had time to insist on them. This cruel persecution began about an hundred and seventy years before Christ. It is much spoken of in the prophecy of Daniel, and referred to in the New Testament. Dan. viii. 9---25. xi. 31---38. Heb. xi. 36---38.*

Antiochus intended not only to extirpate the Jewish religion, but as far as in him lay, the very nation; and in particular he laboured to the utmost to destroy all the copies of the law. Considering how weak they were in comparison with a king of such vast dominion, the providence of God appears very wonderful in defeating his design. Many times the Jews seemed to be on the very brink of ruin, and just ready to be wholly swallowed up: their enemies often thought themselves sure of obtaining their purpose. They once came against the people with a mighty army, and with a design of killing all, except the women and children, and of selling these for slaves; and they were so confident of obtaining their purpose, and others of purchasing, that above a thousand merchants came with the army, with money in their hands, to buy the slaves that should be sold. But God wonderfully stirred up and assisted one Judas, and other his successors, that were called Maccabees, who, with a small handful in comparison, vanquished their enemies time after time, and delivered their nation. This was

* The particulars of this persecution are also recited at length in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of the second book of Maccabees, and the most material parts of it are confirmed by Josephus.

foretold by Daniel, chap. xi. 32. Speaking of Antiochus's persecution, he says, 'And such as do wickedly against the covenant, shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God, shall be strong, and do exploits.'*

God afterwards brought this Antiochus to a fearful, miserable end, by a loathsome disease, under dreadful torments of body, and horrors of mind. This also was foretold, Dan. xi. 45. 'Yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.' After his death, attempts were still made to destroy the church of God; but they were all defeated.

17. The next thing to be taken notice of is the destruction of the Grecian empire, and setting up of the Roman. This was the fourth overturning of the world in this period; and though it was brought to pass more gradually than the setting up of the Grecian empire, yet it far exceeded that, and was much the greatest and largest temporal monarchy that ever appeared on earth. Hence the Roman empire was commonly called all the world, as in Luke ii. 1. And there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that 'all the world should be taxed,' that is, all the Roman empire. This empire is spoken of as much the strongest and greatest of any of the four. Dan ii. 40. 'The fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces, and subdueth all things; and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.' So also Dan. vii. 7, 19, 23. The time that the Romans first conquered and brought under the land of Judea, was between sixty and seventy years before Christ was born. Soon after this the Roman empire was established in its greatest extent, and the world continued subject to it till Christ came, and many hundred years afterwards.

The nations being thus united under one monarchy when Christ came, and when the apostles went forth

* This prediction refers to the courage and success of Judas Maccabeus. See 1 Maccabees iii. iv.

to preach, tended greatly to prepare the way for the spread of the gospel, and the setting up of Christ's kingdom in the world: for the world being thus subject to one government, opened a communication from nation to nation, and so opportunity was given for the more swiftly propagating the gospel through it. Thus in the British nation, the communication from one part of its dominions to another, is much easier than to foreign kingdoms. There are innumerable difficulties in travelling through nations under different independent governments, which are not in travelling through different parts of the same realm, or different dominions of the same prince. So the world being under one government, that of the Romans, in Christ's and the apostles' times, facilitated the apostles travelling, and the gospel's spreading throughout the world.

18. About the same time learning and philosophy were risen to their greatest height in the heathen world. Almost all the famous philosophers that we have an account of among the heathen, lived after the carrying away into Babylon. Almost all the wise men of Greece and Rome flourished in this time. Many of them were indeed men of great temporal wisdom; and that which they in general professed to make their business was to inquire wherein man's chief happiness lay, and the way in which they might obtain it. They seemed earnestly to busy themselves in this inquiry, and wrote multitudes of books about it, many of which are still extant. There have been reckoned up several hundreds of their different opinions concerning it. Thus they wearied themselves in vain, wandering in the dark, not having the glorious gospel to guide them. God was pleased to suffer men to do the utmost they could with human wisdom, and to try the extent of their own understandings to find out the way to happiness, before the true light came to enlighten the world; before he sent the great Prophet to lead men in the right way to happiness. God suffered these philosophers to try what they could do for six

hundred years together; and then it proved, by the events of so long a time, that all they could do was in vain. The world did not become wiser, better, or happier under their instructions, but grew more and more foolish, wicked, and miserable.* He suffered their wisdom and philosophy to come to the greatest height before Christ came, that it might be seen how far reason and philosophy could go in their highest ascent, that the necessity of a divine teacher might appear before Christ came. And God was pleased to make foolish the wisdom of this world, to show men the folly of their best wisdom, by the doctrines of his glorious gospel which were above the reach of all their philosophy. I Cor. i. 19—21.

After God had shown the vanity of human learning, he was pleased to make it subservient to the purposes of Christ's kingdom, as a handmaid to divine revelation; and so the prevalence of learning in the world before Christ came, made way for his coming

* The heathen philosophers, though they have advanced fine sayings and sublime precepts, in some points of morality, have grossly failed in others: such as the toleration or encouragement of revenge, slavery, unnatural lust, fornication, suicide, &c. For example: Plato expressly allowed of excessive drinking at the festivals of Bacchus.—Maximus Tyrius forbid to pray.—Socrates directs his hearers to consider the Greeks as brethren, but all who were of any other country as natural enemies.—Aristotle maintained that nature intended barbarians, all who were not Grecians, to be slaves.—The Stoics held that all crimes were equal.—Plato, Cicero, Epictetus, allow and advise men to continue the idolatry of their ancestors.—Aristotle and Cicero both speak of the forgiveness of injuries, as meanness and pusillanimity.—These were trifles to what follows.—Aristotle and Plato both direct, that means should be used to prevent weak children being brought up.—Cato commends a young man for frequenting the stews.—Cicero expressly speaks of fornication as a thing never found fault with.—Plato recommends a community of women, and advises that soldiers should not be restrained from sensual indulgence, even the most unnatural species of it.—Xenophon relates, without any marks of reprobation, that unnatural lust was encouraged by the laws of several Grecian states.—Solon, their great lawgiver, forbid it only to slaves.—Diogenes inculcated, and openly practised, the most brutal lust.—Zeno and Cato killed themselves.

At this time; Christianity broke forth from the east, like a rising sun, and dispelled this universal darkness, which obscured every part of the globe; and which even at this day, prevails in all those remoter regions, to which its salutary influence has not as yet extended. [Soame Jenyns's Internal Evidence of the Christian Religion.]

by showing the vanity of human wisdom, and the necessity of the gospel. Hereby also a handmaid was prepared to the gospel; and it was made use of as such by the apostle Paul, who was famed for his learning, and was skilled not only in that of the Jews, but also of the philosophers; and improved it to the purposes of the gospel, as you may see he did in disputing with the philosophers at Athens. Acts xvii. 22. He by his learning knew well how to improve what he had read in their writings, and even cites their own poets.* And now Dionysius, who was a philosopher, was converted by him; and as ecclesiastical history gives us an account, made a great instrument of promoting the gospel. There were also many others in that and the following ages, who were eminently useful by their human learning, in promoting the interests of Christ's kingdom.

19. Just before Christ was born, the Roman empire was not only raised to its greatest height, but also settled in peace. About four and twenty years before this, Augustus Cæsar, the first Roman emperor, ascended the throne: till then the Roman empire had of a long time been a commonwealth under the government of the senate, but now it became an absolute monarchy. This Augustus Cæsar, as he was the first, so he was the greatest of all the Roman emperors. Thus the power of the heathen world, which was Satan's visible kingdom, was raised to its greatest height, after it had been rising gradually and strengthening itself more and more from the days of Solomon to this day, which was about a thousand years. Now the heathen world

* Those words, 'For in him we live,' &c. have been supposed by some to be an allusion to an old Greek poet; but be this as it may, the following words, 'For we are also his offspring,' or as Doddridge more properly renders them, preserving their poetic air,

'For we his offspring are'—

These are unquestionably the words of Aratus, a poet of Cilicia, Paul's own country, who wrote three hundred years before his time. 1 Cor. xv. 33, is supposed to be a quotation from Menander, another Greek poet.

was in its greatest glory for strength, wealth, and learning.

God did two things to prepare the way for Christ's coming, wherein he took a contrary method from that which human wisdom would have taken. He brought his own visible people very low, and made them weak; but the heathen, who were his enemies, he exalted to the greatest height, for the more glorious triumph of the cross of Christ. With a small number in their greatest weakness, he conquered his enemies in their greatest glory. Thus Christ triumphed over principalities and powers in his cross.

Augustus Cæsar had been for many years establishing the state of the Roman empire, subduing his enemies in one part and another, till the very year that Christ was born; when all his enemies being subdued, his dominion over the world seemed to be settled in its greatest glory. All was established in peace; in token whereof the Romans shut the temple of Janus, which was an established symbol among them of there being universal peace throughout the Roman empire.* And this universal peace, which was begun the year that Christ was born, lasted twelve years, till the year that Christ disputed with the doctors in the temple.

Thus the world, after it had been, as it were, in a continual convulsion for so many hundred years together, like the four winds striving together on the tumultuous raging ocean, whence arose those four great monarchies; being now established in the greatest height of the fourth and last monarchy, and settled in quietness, all things are ready for the birth of Christ. This remarkable universal peace, after so many ages of tumult and war, was a fit prelude for the ushering of the glorious Prince of Peace into the world.

* The temple of Janus was a square building, some say of intire brass, which contained a statue of Janus five feet high; with brazen gates always kept open in time of war, but shut in time of peace; which however seldom happened. Historians mention eight times of its being shut up, three of which were in the reign of Augustus, and one of them in the time of our Lord's birth.

Thus I have gone through our first grand period, that from the fall to the time of the incarnation of Christ ; and have shown the truth of the first proposition, viz. That from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ, God was doing those things that were preparatory to Christ's coming, and forerun- of it.

IMPROVEMENT OF PERIOD I.

Before I proceed to the next proposition, I would make some few remarks, by way of improvement, upon what has been said under this.

1. We may strongly argue, that Jesus of Nazareth is indeed the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world ; and that the Christian is the true religion, seeing Christ is the very person so evidently pointed at, in all the great dispensations of divine providence from the fall of man, and was so undoubtedly in many instances foretold from age to age, and shadowed forth in a vast variety of types and figures. If we seriously consider the course of things from the beginning, and observe the motions of all the great wheels of providence from one age to another, we shall discern that they all tend hither. They are all as so many lines, whose course, if accurately followed, will be found to centre here. This person came into the world with a commission and authority from God to do his work, and to declare his mind. It cannot be any vain imagination, but a plain and evident truth, that that person who was born at Bethlehem, and dwelt at Nazareth and at Capernaum, and was crucified without the gates of Jerusalem, must be the great Messiah, or anointed of God. And blessed are all they that believe in and confess him, and miserable are all that deny him. This shows the unreasonableness of the Deists, who deny revealed religion ; and of the Jews, who deny that this Jesus is the Messiah foretold and promised to their fathers.

Here some persons may be ready to object, that perhaps some subtle or cunning men contrived to forge this history, and these prophecies, so that they should all point to Jesus Christ on purpose to prove him to be the Messiah. To such it may be replied, how could their craft and subtilty help them to foresee and point at an event that was to come to pass many ages afterwards; for no fact can be more evident, than that the Jews had those writings long before Christ was born; as they have them still in great veneration, wherever they are throughout the world; and they would never have received such a contrivance from Christians, to point to and confirm Jesus to be the Messiah, who they always denied to be so; and much less would they have been made to believe that they always had these books in their hands, if they had been an imposition.

2. What has been said, affords a strong argument for the divine authority of the books of the Old Testament, from that admirable harmony there is in them, whereby they all point to the same object. For we may see from what has been said, how all the parts of the Old Testament, though written by so many different penmen, and in ages distant one from another, do all beautifully harmonize: all agree in one testimony, and all centre in the same event; an event which it was impossible any one of them should foreknow, but by a divine revelation, even the future coming of Christ. This is evident from what has been said above.

Now, if the Old Testament was not inspired by God, what account can be given of such an agreement? For if these books were only human writings, written without any divine direction, then none of these penmen knew that there would come such a person as Jesus Christ into the world; his coming was only a mere figment of their own brain. And if so, how happened it that this imagination of theirs, which they foretold without any manner of ground for their prediction, was so exactly fulfilled? Especially how did they come all to agree in it, all point-

ing exactly to the same thing, though they lived so many hundred years distant one from another? This admirable agreement in a future event, is therefore a clear and certain evidence of the divine authority of those writings.

3. Hence we may learn what a weak and ignorant objection it is which some make against some parts of the Old Testament, that they consist so much of the histories of their kings and rulers, of their wars with the neighbouring nations, and of the changes that happened from time to time in their state and government. Other nations, say they, used to keep histories of their public affairs as well as the Jews, why then should we think that these histories are the word of God, more than those of other people? But what has been said, shows the folly and vanity of such an objection. For hereby it appears, that the case of these histories is very different from that of all others. This alone gives us an account of the original of all things; and deduces them down in a regular series from that original, giving a view of the whole scheme of divine providence, from the beginning to the consummation of all things; with an account of the wise and holy designs of the Governor of the world in all.—By these histories it appears how God has been carrying on the glorious work of redemption from age to age. And though histories, yet are they full of divine instruction, and show forth Christ, and his glorious gospel, no less than other parts of the holy scriptures which are not so.

The objection, that it is a common thing for nations and kingdoms to write histories and keep records of their wars, and the revolutions that come to pass in their territories, is so far from being a weighty objection against the historical part of scripture, as though it were not the word of God, that it is a strong argument in favour of it. For if reason and the light of nature teaches all civilized nations to keep such records, and to publish them for the information of others; how much more may

we expect that God would give the world a record of the dispensations of his divine government, which doubtless is infinitely more worthy of an history for our information? If wise kings have taken care that there should be good histories written of the nations over which they have reigned, shall we think it incredible, that Jesus Christ should take care that his church, which is his kingdom, his peculiar people, should have in their hands a history of their nation, and of his government over them?

If it had not been for the history of the Old Testament, how ignorant should we have been of God's dealings towards mankind, and especially his church, from the beginning? We should have been wholly in the dark about the creation of the world, the fall of man, the first rise and continued progress of the dispensation of grace towards fallen mankind; how the light of the gospel first began to dawn in the world, how it increased, and how things were preparing for the coming of Christ.

If we are christians, we belong to that divine building of God that has been the subject of our discourse: but if it had not been for the history of the Old Testament, we should never have known what was the first occasion of God's going about this building, and how the foundation of it was laid, or how it has gone on from the beginning. The times of the history of the Old Testament are mostly such as no other history reaches up to; and therefore if God had not preserved an account of these things in his word, we should have been wholly without them.

Those that object against the authority of the Old Testament history of the nation of the Jews, may as well make it an objection against Moses's account of the creation that it is historical; for in the former we have the history of a work no less important, viz. the work of redemption. Nay, this is a far greater and more glorious work, as we observed before; and if it were inquired which of the two works, the work of creation, or the work of provi-

dence, is greatest; it must be answered, the work of providence; but the work of redemption is the greatest of the works of providence. And let those who make this objection consider what part of the Old Testament can be spared, without making a great breach in that thread or series of events by which this glorious work has been carried on.—This leads me to observe,

4. That from what has been said, we may see much of the wisdom of God in the composition of the scriptures of the Old Testament. Let us briefly take a view of the several parts of it, and of the need there was of them.

First it was necessary that we should have some account of the creation of the world, of our first parents and their primitive state; of the fall, of the old world and its degeneracy, and of the universal deluge; also of the origin of nations after this destruction of mankind.

It seems proper that there should be some account of the succession of the church of God from the beginning; and seeing God suffered all the world to degenerate, and only took one nation to be his people, to preserve the true worship and religion till the Saviour should come, that in them the world might gradually be prepared for that great light; and those wonderful things of which he was to be the author; and that they might be a typical nation, in whom God might shadow forth the future glorious things of the gospel. It was therefore necessary that we should have some account of this, how it was first done by the calling of Abraham, by their being bondslaves in Egypt, and by their being brought thence to Canaan. It was necessary that we should have some account of the revelation which God made of himself to that people, in giving their law, in the appointment of their typical worship, and of the formation of their civil and ecclesiastical state.

It seems necessary that we should have some account of their being actually brought to Canaan,

their promised land. That we should have a history of the successions of the church of Israel, and of those providences of God towards them, which were most considerable and fullest of gospel mystery. That we should have some account of the highest external glory of that nation under David and Solomon, and more particularly of the former, whose history is so full of the gospel, and in whom began the race of their kings; and that we should have some account of the building of the temple, which was moreover so full of mystery.

It was also a matter of consequence, that we should have some account of Israel's dividing from Judah, and of the ten tribes' captivity and utter rejection; of the succession of the kings of Judah and of the church, till their captivity into Babylon; of their return from their captivity, and re-settlement in their own land; and of the origin of the last state that the church was in before Christ came.

A little consideration will convince every one, that all these things were necessary, and that none of them could well be spared; and in the general, that it was necessary that we should have a history of God's church till such times as are within the reach of human histories; and it was of importance that we should have an inspired history of those times of the Jewish church, wherein there was kept up a more extraordinary intercourse between God and them, and while he used to dwell among them, as it were visibly, revealing himself by the Shechinah, by Urim and Thummim, and by prophecy, and so more immediately to order their affairs. Also that we should have some account of the great dispensations of God in prophecy, which were to be after the finishing of inspired history. So it was exceeding needful that there should be a number of prophets raised up, who should foretel the coming of the Son of God, and the nature and glory of his kingdom, to be as so many harbingers to make way for him, and that their prophecies should remain in the church.

It was also desirable that the church should have a book of divine songs given by inspiration from God, wherein there should be a lively representation of the true spirit of devotion, of faith, hope, and divine love, joy, resignation, humility, obedience, and repentance. Again, that we should have such books of moral instructions as those of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, relating to the affairs and state of mankind, and the concerns of human life, containing rules of true wisdom and prudence for our conduct in all circumstances: likewise that we should have such a representation of the great love between Christ and his spouse, the church, particularly adapted to the disposition and holy affections of a true believer, as we have in Solomon's Song: also that we should have a book to teach us how to conduct ourselves under affliction, seeing the church of God is here in a militant state, and his people through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of heaven. Therefore God has given us a book most proper in these circumstances, even that of Job, written upon occasion of the afflictions of a particular saint, and which was probably given to the church in Egypt under her afflictions there; and is made use of by the apostle to comfort christians under persecutions. James v. 11. 'Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.' God was also pleased, in this book of Job, to give some view of the ancient divinity before the giving of the law.

Thus, from this brief review, I think it appears, that every part of the scriptures of the Old Testament is very useful and necessary, and no part of it can be spared, without loss to the church; and therefore the wisdom of God is conspicuous in ordering that the scriptures of the Old Testament should consist of those very books of which they do consist.

Before I dismiss this particular, I would add, that it is very observable, that the history of the Old Testament is large and particular where the great affair

of redemption required it ; as where there was most done towards this work, and most to typify Christ, and to prepare the way for him. Thus it is very large and particular in the history of Abraham and the other patriarchs ; but very short in the account of the time which the children of Israel spent in Egypt. So it is large in the account of the redemption out of Egypt, and the first settling of the affairs of the Jewish church and nation in Moses and Joshua's time ; but much shorter in the account of the time of the Judges. So again, it is large and particular in the account of David and Solomon's times, and very short in the history of the ensuing reigns. Thus the accounts are long or short, just as there is more or less of the affair of redemption to be seen in them.

5. From what has been said, we may see that Christ and his redemption are the great subject of the whole Bible. Concerning the New Testament the matter is plain ; and by what has been said on this subject hitherto, it appears to be so also with respect to the Old Testament. Christ and his redemption is the great subject of the prophecies, as well as the songs of the Old Testament ; and the moral rules and precepts are all given in subordination to him. Christ and his redemption are also the great subject of the history of the Old Testament, from the beginning all along ; and even the history of the creation is brought in as an introduction to the history of redemption which immediately follows it. The whole book, both the Old Testament and the New, is filled with the gospel ; only with this difference, that the Old Testament contains the gospel under a vail, but the New contains it unvail'd, so that we may see the glory of the Lord with open face.

6. By what has been said, we may see the usefulness and excellency of the Old Testament. Some are ready to look on it as being out of date, and as if we, in these days of the gospel, had but little to do with it ; which is a very great mistake, arising

from want of observing its nature and design, which if it were observed, would appear full of the gospel of Christ, and would in an excellent manner illustrate and confirm the glorious doctrines and promises of the New Testament. Those parts of the Old Testament which are commonly looked upon as containing the least divine instruction, are as it were, mines and treasures of gospel knowledge ; and the reason why they are thought to contain so little is, because persons do but superficially read them. The treasures which are hidden underneath are not observed. They only look on the top of the ground, and so suddenly pass a judgment that there is nothing there ; but they never dig into the mine. If they did, they would find it richly stored with silver and gold, and would be abundantly requited for their pains.

What has been said may show us what a precious treasure God has committed into our hands, in that he has given us the Bible. How little do most persons consider how much they enjoy, in that they have the possession of that holy book, and may converse with it as they please. What an excellent book is this, and how far exceeding all human writings, wherein God reveals to us, and gives us a view of the grand design and glorious scheme of Providence from the beginning of the world, either in history or prophecy ; that reveals the great Redeemer and his glorious redemption, and the various steps by which God accomplishes it from the first foundation to the top stone. Shall we prize a history which gives us a clear account of some great earthly prince, or mighty warrior, as of Alexander the Great, or Julius Cæsar, or the Duke of Marlborough ; and shall we not prize the history that God gives us of the glorious kingdom of his Son Jesus Christ, the Prince and the Saviour ; and of the wars and other great transactions of that King of kings and Lord of armies, the Lord mighty in battle ;---the history of the things which he has wrought for the redemption of his chosen people ?

7. This subject may make us sensible how much most persons are to blame for their inattentive way of reading the scriptures. How much do the scriptures contain, if it were but observed? The Bible is the most comprehensive book in the world. But what will all this signify to us, if we read it without observing what is the drift of the Holy Ghost in it? The psalmist begs of God, 'That he would enlighten his eyes, that he might behold wondrous things out of his law.' The scriptures are full of wondrous things. Those histories which are commonly read as if they were only histories of the private concerns of such and such particular persons, such as the histories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph; also the history of Ruth, and the histories of particular lawgivers and princes, as the history of Joshua and the Judges, and David and the Israelitish princes; are accounts of much greater things, things of far more importance and extensive concern, than those that read them are commonly aware of.

The histories of scripture are commonly read as if they were stories written only to entertain men's fancies, and to amuse their leisure hours, when the infinitely great things contained or pointed at in them are passed over, and never taken notice of. Whatever treasures the scriptures contain, we shall be never the better for them, if we do not observe them. He that has a Bible, and does not observe what is contained in it, is like a man who has a box full of silver and gold, and does not know it, does not observe that it is any thing more than a vessel filled with common stones. As long as it is thus with him, he will never be the better for his treasure; for he that knows not that he has a treasure, will never make use of what he has, and so might as well be without it. He who has a plenty of the choicest food stored up in his house, and does not know it, will never taste what he has, and will be as likely to starve, as if his house were empty.

8. We are here taught how great a person Jesus Christ is, and how great an errand he came into

the world upon, seeing there was so much done to prepare the way for his coming. God had been doing nothing else but preparing the way for his coming, through all ages from the beginning. If we had notice of a certain stranger's being about to come into a country, and should observe that a great preparation was made for his coming, that many months were taken up in it, and great things done; that many great alterations were made in the state of the whole country, and that many hands were employed, and persons of great note were engaged in making preparation for the coming of this person, and the whole country was overturned, and all its affairs and concerns so ordered as to be subservient to the design of entertaining that person when he should come; it would be natural for us to think with ourselves, why, surely, this is some extraordinary person indeed, and it is some very great business that he is coming upon!

How great a person then must He be, for whose coming into the world the great God of heaven and earth, and Governor of all things, spent four thousand years in preparing the way,—bringing mighty events to pass, accomplishing wonders without number, often overturning the world in order to it, and causing all the revolutions and changes from generation to generation to be subservient to this great design? Surely this must be some very great and extraordinary person, and a great work indeed it must needs be that he is coming about!

We read that when Christ was coming into Jerusalem, and the multitudes ran before him, and cut down branches of palm-trees, and strewed them in the way, and others spread their garments in the way, and cried, 'Hosanna to the son of David,' that the whole city was moved, saying, Who is this? Matt. xxi. 8—10. They wondered who that extraordinary person should be, that there should be such an ado made on occasion of his coming into the city, and to prepare the way before him. But

if we consider what has been said on this subject, what great things were done in all ages to prepare the way for Christ's advent, and how the world was often overturned to make way for it, much more may we cry out, Who is this? What great person is this? And say, as in Psalm xxiv. 8, 10, 'Who is the King of glory,' that God should show such respect, and put such vast honour upon him? Surely this person is honourable indeed in God's eyes, and greatly beloved of him; and surely it is a great errand upon which he is sent into the world.

PERIOD II.

FROM CHRIST'S INCARNATION TO HIS RESURRECTION.

HAVING shown how the work of redemption was carried on through the first period, from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ, I come now to the second, viz. the time of Christ's humiliation, or the space from his incarnation to his resurrection. And this is the most remarkable period that ever was or ever will be. Though it was but between thirty and forty years, yet more was done in it than had been from the beginning of the world to that time. We have observed, that all events from the fall to the incarnation were only preparatory for what was now done. And it may also be observed, that what was done before the commencement of time, in the eternal counsels of God, and between the Persons of the Trinity, chiefly respected this period. We therefore now proceed to consider the second proposition, viz.

That the time from Christ's Incarnation to his Resurrection was employed in Procuring and Purchasing Redemption.

Though there were many things done preparatory to our redemption from the fall of man to this time, and millions of sacrifices had been offered up; yet none of them could purchase our redemption. But as soon as Christ was incarnate, the purchase immediately began; and the whole time of Christ's humiliation, from his becoming incarnate, till the morning that he arose from the dead, was taken up in this purchase, and then it was completely finished. As nothing was done before Christ's incarnation, so nothing was done after his resurrection, to purchase redemption for men. Nor will there ever be any thing more done to all eternity: but the very moment that the human nature of Christ ceased to remain under the power of death, the utmost farthing of the price of the salvation was paid for every one of the elect.

But for the more orderly and regular consideration of the great things done by our Redeemer to purchase redemption for us—I would, (1) Speak of Christ becoming incarnate to capacitate himself for this purchase;—and (2) Of the purchase itself.



I. OF THE INCARNATION.

FIRST, I would consider Christ's taking upon him our nature, to put himself in a capacity to purchase redemption for us.—This was absolutely necessary, for though Christ, as God, was infinitely sufficient for the work, yet to his being in an immediate capacity for it, it was needful that he should not only be God but man. If Christ had remained only in the divine nature, he could not have purchased our salvation; not from any imperfection of the divine nature, but by reason of its absolute and infinite perfection; for Christ, merely as God, was not capable either of obedience or suffering. And it was necessary not only that Christ should take upon

him a created nature, but that he should take upon him *our* nature. It would not have sufficed for him to have become an angel, and to have obeyed and suffered in the angelic nature. But it was necessary that he should become a man, and that upon three accounts.

(1) It was needful to answer the law, that *that* nature should obey, to which the law was given. Man's law could not be answered, but by being obeyed by man. God's justice insisted upon it, that the law which he had given to man should be honoured and submitted to, and fulfilled by the human nature, otherwise the law could not be answered for men. The words, *Thou shalt*, or *Thou shalt not* do thus or thus, were spoken to mankind, and therefore the human nature must fulfil them.

(2) It was needful to answer the law, that the nature that sinned should die. These words, 'Thou shalt surely die,' respect the human nature: the same nature to which the command was given, was the nature to which the threatening was directed.

(3) God saw meet, that the same world which was the stage of man's fall and ruin, should also be the stage of his redemption. We read often of his coming into the world to save sinners, and of God's sending him into the world for this purpose. It was needful that he should come into this sinful, miserable world, to restore and save it, and that he should tabernacle with us. 'The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.' John i. 14.

Concerning the Incarnation of Christ, I would observe the following things:

1. The incarnation itself; in which especially two things are to be considered,---(1) His conception, which was in the womb of Mary, whereby he became truly the Son of man, as he was often called. He was one of the posterity of Adam, a child of Abraham, and a son of David according to God's promise. But his conception was not in the way of

ordinary generation, but by the power of the Holy Ghost. Christ was formed in the womb of the Virgin, of the substance of her body, by the power of the Spirit of God. So that he was the immediate son of the woman, but not the immediate son of any male whatsoever; and so he was the seed of the woman, and the son of a virgin.—(2) His birth. Though the conception of Christ was supernatural, yet after he was conceived, his human nature was gradually perfected in the womb as others are, and his birth was in the ordinary way of nature. But his conception being supernatural, by the power of the Holy Ghost, he was both conceived and born without sin.

2. The second thing I would observe concerning the incarnation of Christ, is the fulness of the time in which it was accomplished. It was after things had been preparing for it from the fall, and when all things were ready. It came to pass at a time, which in infinite wisdom was the most fit and proper. 'When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.' Gal. iv. 4.

It was now the most proper time on every account. Any time before the flood would not have been so fit a time; for then the mischief and ruin that the fall brought on mankind was not so fully seen. The curse did not so fully come on the earth before the flood, as it did afterwards: for though the ground was cursed in a great measure before, yet it pleased God that the curse should once, before the restoration of Christ, be executed in a universal destruction as it were of the very form of the earth, that the dire effect of the fall might once in such a way be seen before the recovery by Christ. Though mankind were mortal before the flood, yet their lives were continued the greater part of a thousand years; a kind of immortality in comparison with what the life of man is now. It pleased God that the curse, 'Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return,' should have its full accomplish-

ment, before the Redeemer came to purchase a never-ending life for man.

It would not have been so fit a time for Christ to come, after the flood, before Moses's time ; for till then mankind were not so universally apostatized from the true God ; they were not fallen universally into heathenish darkness, and so the need of Christ, the light of the world, was not so evident. The woful consequence of the fall with respect to man's mortality, was not so fully manifest till then ; for man's life was not so shortened as to be reduced to the present standard till about Mose's time. It was most fit that the time of the Messiah's coming should not be till all nations, except the children of Israel, had lain long in heathenish darkness ; that the remedilessness of their disease might by long experience be seen, and so the absolute necessity of the heavenly Physician.

Another reason why Christ did not come soon after the flood probably was, that the earth might be full of people, that Christ might have a more extensive kingdom, and that the effects of his light, and power, and grace, might be glorified, and that his victory over Satan might be attended with a greater multitude of conquests. It was also needful that the coming of Christ should be many ages after Moses, that the church might be prepared, by the Messiah's being many ways prefigured and foretold, and by his being long expected. It was not proper that Christ should come before the Babylonish captivity, because Satan's kingdom was not then come to its height. The heathen world before that consisted of lesser kingdoms ; but God saw meet that the Messiah should come in the time of one of the four great monarchies of the world. Nor was it proper that he should come in the time of the Babylonish monarchy ; for it was God's will, that several general monarchies should follow one another, and that the coming of the Messiah should be in the time of the last, which appeared above them all. The Persian monarchy, by overcoming the Baby-

lonian, appeared above it; and so the Grecian, by overcoming the Persian, appeared above that; and for the same reason, the Roman above the Grecian. Now it was the will of God, that his Son should make his appearance in the world in the time of this greatest and strongest monarchy, which was Satan's visible kingdom in the world; that by overcoming this, he might visibly overcome Satan's kingdom in its greatest strength and glory, and so obtain the more complete triumph over Satan himself.

It was not proper that Christ should come before the Babylonish captivity; for before that we have no histories of the state of the heathen world, to give us so full a proof of the need of a Saviour. Besides, learning did not much flourish before that time, and so there had not been opportunity to show the insufficiency of human learning and wisdom to reform and save mankind. Again, before that, the Jews were not dispersed over the world, as they were afterwards; and so things were not prepared in this respect for the coming of Christ. The necessity of abolishing the Jewish dispensation was not then so apparent as it was afterwards made, by the dispersion of the Jews; neither was the way prepared for the propagation of the gospel, as it was afterwards by the same dispersion. Many other things might be mentioned, by which it would appear, that no other time before that very time in which Christ did come, would have been proper for his appearing in the world to purchase the redemption of men.

3. The next thing that I would observe is, the greatness of this event. Christ's incarnation was more wonderful than any thing that had ever come to pass; and there has been but one greater event that has ever come to pass since, and that was his death. The creation of the world was a marvellous event, but not so much so as the incarnation of Christ. It was a great thing for God to make the creature, but not so much as for the Creator himself

to become one. We have spoken of many great things that were accomplished from one time to another, in the ages between the fall of man and the incarnation of Christ; but this was a much greater event than any of them. Then was the greatest person born, that ever was or ever will be.

4. Next observe the remarkable circumstances of it; such as his being born of a virgin, pious and holy indeed, but poor, as appeared by her offering at her purification. According to that which is said in the law of the Lord, she brought 'a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons.' Luke ii. 24. This refers to Lev. v. 7. 'And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons.' This poor virgin was also espoused to a husband who was a poor man. Though they were both of the royal family of David, the most honourable family, and Joseph was the rightful heir to the crown; yet the family was reduced to a very low state. This is represented by the tabernacle of David being fallen or broken down. 'In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof, and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.' Amos ix. 11. Acts xv. 16.

He was born in the town of Bethlehem as was foretold;* and there was a very remarkable providence of God to bring about the fulfilment of this prophecy, the taxing of all the world by Augustus

* This was predicted by the prophet Micah, chap. v. 2; and his words are quoted with some variation by the evangelist Matthew, chap. ii. 3—6. In Matthew it is said, 'Thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art *not* the least;' whereas in the Hebrew it is, 'though thou *art* the least.' The sense in both is clear and consistent, for this city, though far from being the most considerable in extent of all those belonging to the princes of Judah, is nevertheless, on account of the Governor or Ruler that was to come out of it, not the least among the thousands of Judah. Who this Ruler, or Prince, or King is, that should come from Bethlehem, is determined by the description that immediately follows, 'whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.' It is He who so often went forth in the name of the Lord, who conversed with Abraham and Moses, who was before the foundation of the earth was laid, and who at last was made manifest in the flesh, and came forth from Bethlehem, the King of the Jews.

Cæsar.* Luke ii. 1. He was born in a very low condition, even in a stable, and laid in a manger.†

5. I would observe the concomitants of this great event.—And,

(1) The return of the Spirit of prophecy, which indeed began a little before the incarnation of Christ, but was given on that occasion, either to reveal his birth, or that of his forerunner John the Baptist. I have before observed how the Spirit of prophecy ceased not long after the book of Malachi was written, and from about the same time visions and immediate revelations ceased also. But now, on this occasion, they are granted anew, and the Spirit in these operations returns again. The first instance of its restoration that we have an account of is in the vision of Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist. Luke i. The next is in the vision which the virgin Mary had. The third in the vision of Joseph. Matt. i. In the next place, the Spirit was given to Elizabeth; then to Mary, as appears by her song, and then to Zacharias again. Luke i. 41, 46, 64. Also to Simeon, to Anna, and afterwards to the wise men of the east. Then to Joseph again, directing him to flee into Egypt, and after that directing his return. Luke ii. 25, 36. Matt. ii. 19—23.

(2) Observe the great notice that was taken of the incarnation, both in heaven and on earth. How

• The emperor of Rome issues a royal edict, that all his large dominions shall be taxed. He meant to fill his coffers with money, but a greater Sovereign than he intended the fulfilling of his promises. While every man repairs to his city to be taxed, in obedience to the imperial mandate, Joseph his father, as was supposed, repairs among the rest to Bethlechem, the city of his family, being of the house and lineage of David. And now he is arrived with Mary, his espoused wife; who being near the time of her delivery, had been directed by providence, or special instinct, to accompany her husband on this occasion.

† No costly palace receives our weary travellers. A common inn is the place of Christ's nativity; perhaps a silent intimation that he himself should be a common Saviour. Nor even in the inn could a commodious apartment be spared to the Lord of heaven and earth. Ye men of Bethlechem, what a Guest did you exclude! The coarse accommodation of a manger was all his mother could obtain for her tender infant. Lo, there He lies wrapt in swaddling clothes, whom the heavens cannot contain. This is He whose name is Immanuel, which by interpretation is, God with us!

it was noticed by the glorious inhabitants of the heavenly world, appears by their joyful songs on this occasion, heard by the shepherds in the night. This was the greatest event of providence that the angels had ever beheld. We read of their singing praises when they saw the formation of the lower world. Job xxxviii. 7. 'The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.' So now they sang praises on this much greater occasion, of the birth of the Son of God, who is the Creator of the world.

The glorious angels had all along expected this event: they had taken great notice of the prophecies and promises of these things, for we are told that the angels desire to look into the affairs of redemption. 1 Pet. i. 12. They had all along been the ministers of Christ in this great affair, in all the several steps of it down from the very fall of man. They were employed in God's dealings with his ancient people from time to time, and doubtless they had long joyfully expected the coming of Christ; but now they see it accomplished, and therefore they are filled with rapturous delight.

Notice was taken of it by some among the Jews; particularly by Elizabeth and the Virgin Mary before the birth of Christ; not to say by John the Baptist before he was born, when he leaped in his mother's womb as it were for joy, at the voice of the salutation of Mary. But Elizabeth and Mary do most joyfully praise God together, when they meet, with Christ and his forerunner in their wombs, and the Holy Spirit in their souls. And afterwards what joyful notice is taken of this event by the shepherds, and by those holy persons Zacharias, Simeon, and Anna. How do they praise God on this occasion! Thus the church in heaven, and on earth, unite in their joy and praise.

Great part of the universe takes joyful notice of the incarnation of Christ: heaven takes notice of it, and the inhabitants sing for joy. The world of mankind also takes notice of it, even Gentiles as

well as Jews; for it pleased God to put honour on his Son, by wonderfully stirring up some of the wisest of the Gentiles to come a long journey to see and worship the Son of God at his birth, being led by a miraculous star, signifying the birth of that glorious person, who is the bright and morning star, going before, and leading them to the very place where the young child was. Some think they were instructed by the prophecy of Balaam, who dwelt in the eastern parts, and foretold Christ's coming as a star that should rise out of Jacob: or they might be excited by that general expectation there was of the Messiah's coming about that time, before spoken of, from the notice they had of it by the prophecies which the Jews had with them in their dispersions in all parts of the world.

(3) The next concomitant of the birth of Christ was his circumcision.---But this may more properly be spoken of under another head.

(4) Another concomitant circumstance was his coming into the second temple, being first brought thither when an infant, on occasion of the purification of the blessed Virgin. Thus it was foretold: 'The desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house (or temple) with glory.' Hag. ii. 7. And again: 'The Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant.' Mal. iii. 1. And now was the first instance of the fulfilment of these prophecies.

(5) The last thing I shall here mention is the sceptre's departing from Judah, in the death of Herod the Great. The sceptre had never totally departed from Judah till now. Judah's sceptre was greatly diminished in the revolt of the ten tribes in Jeroboam's time; and the sceptre departed from Israel or Ephraim, at the time of the captivity of the ten tribes by Shalmaneser. Still the sceptre remained in the tribe of Judah, under the kings of the house of David. And when the tribes of Judah and Benjamin were carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar, the sceptre of Judah ceased for a little while,

till the return from the captivity under Cyrus, and then, though they were not an independent government, as they had been before, but owed allegiance to the kings of Persia; yet their governor was of themselves, who had the power of life and death, and they were governed by their own laws; and so Judah had 'a lawgiver from between his feet' during the Persian and Grecian monarchies. Towards the latter part of the Grecian monarchy, the people were governed by kings of their own, of the race of the Maccabees, for the greater part of a hundred years. After that they were subdued by the Romans. But the Romans suffered them to be governed by their own laws, and to have a king of their own, Herod the Great, who reigned about forty years, and governed with kingly authority, only paying homage to the Romans. But presently after Christ was born he died, and Archelaus succeeded him; but was soon put down by the Roman emperor; and then the sceptre fully departed from Judah. Matt. ii. 19. There were no more temporal kings of Judah after that, neither had that people their governors henceforth from among themselves, but were ruled by a Roman governor sent among them; and they ceased to have any more the power of life and death. Hence the Jews say to Pilate, 'It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.' John xviii. 31. Thus the sceptre departed from Judah when Shiloh came.



II. THE PURCHASE OF REDEMPTION.

HAVING thus considered Christ's coming into the world, and his taking on him our nature, to put himself in a capacity for the purchase of redemption, I come now to speak of the purchase itself. And here I would---(1) Show what is intended by the purchase of redemption---(2) Make some general observations concerning those things by which this

purchase was made---(3) Consider what Christ did ; and---(4) What he suffered to make that purchase.

I. Christ purchased our redemption both by his satisfaction and his merit. The price that Christ lays down, pays our debt, and so it satisfies. By its intrinsic value, and by the agreement between the Father and the Son, it procures our title for happiness, and so it merits. The satisfaction of Christ is to free us from misery, and the merit of Christ is to purchase happiness for us.

The word purchase, as it is used with respect to the purchase of Christ, is taken either strictly, or more largely. It is used strictly, to signify only the merit of Christ ; and more largely, to include both his satisfaction and merit. Indeed many of the words used in this affair have various acceptations. Thus divines sometimes use the term merit for the whole price that Christ offered. So the word satisfaction is also sometimes used, to include not only propitiation, but also for his meritorious obedience. For in some sense, not only suffering the penalty, but obedience, is needful to satisfy the law. The reason of the various use of these terms seems to be, that they do not differ so much really as relatively. They both consist in paying a price of infinite value ; but that price, as it respects a debt to be paid, is called satisfaction ; and as it respects a benefit to be obtained, is called merit.* He who lays down a price to pay a debt, does in some sense make a

* A slave is redeemed from captivity, a debtor from prison, when some one kindly procures their liberty, by giving some equivalent to the person by whom they are detained. We are debtors ; we cannot pay to God what we owe. We are captives, and we cannot hasten to be loosed. Jesus Christ is the merciful Redeemer, who pays the sum we owed, and says to the prisoner, ' Go forth.' Hence an apostle says, ' Ye are not your own ; ye are bought with a price.' 1 Cor. vi. 20. What this price is may be learned from another apostle : ' Ye are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ. 1 Pet. i. 18.

' The ransom was paid down. The fund of heaven
 pour'd forth the price,
 All price beyond. Though curious to compute,
 Archangels fail to cast the mighty sum.'

purchase; he purchases liberty from the obligation. And he who lays down a price to purchase a good, does as it were make satisfaction: he satisfies the conditional demands of him to whom he pays it. This may suffice concerning what is meant by the purchase of Christ.

II. I proceed to some general observations concerning those things by which this purchase was made.

1. I observe, that whatever in Christ's work had the nature of satisfaction, was by virtue of his suffering or humiliation. But whatever had the nature of merit, it was by virtue of the excellency of his obedience.—The satisfaction of Christ consists in his answering the demands of the law on man, which were consequent on the breach of it. These were answered by suffering its penalty. The merit of Christ consists in what he did to fulfil what the law demanded before man sinned, which was obedience.

The satisfaction or propitiation of Christ consists either in his suffering pain, or being subject to abasement. For he not only made satisfaction by proper suffering, but by whatever had the nature of humiliation and abasement; as his continuance under the power of death, while he lay in the grave, though neither his body nor his soul strictly endured suffering after he was dead. So all the obedience of Christ in his state of humiliation, in one respect or another, had the nature of merit in it, and was part of the price with which he purchased happiness for the elect.

2. Both Christ's satisfaction for sin, and also his meriting happiness by his righteousness, were carried on through the whole time of his humiliation. Christ's satisfaction for sin was not only by his last sufferings, though it was principally by them; but all his sufferings, and all the humiliation that he was subject to from the first moment of his incarnation to his resurrection, were propitiatory or satis-

factory.---So also the purchase of happiness by his righteousness was also carried on through the whole time of his humiliation ; not only in the course of his life, but in laying down his life at the end.

3. It was by the same things that Christ both satisfied God's justice, and also purchased eternal happiness. He did not make satisfaction by some things that he did, and then work out a righteousness by others, but in the same acts by which he wrought out righteousness, he also made satisfaction, only taken in a different relation. Those same acts of obedience wherein the righteousness of Christ consisted, and which purchased heaven for us, considered with respect to the self-denial, pain, and humiliation which was in them, had the nature of satisfaction, and procured our pardon. Thus his going about doing good, preaching the gospel, and teaching his disciples, was a part of his righteousness, as it was done in obedience to the Father : and a part of his satisfaction, as he did it with great labour, trouble, and weariness, and under great temptations, exposing himself thereby to reproach and contempt. So his laying down his life had the nature of satisfaction, considered as his bearing our punishment in our stead ; but considered as an act of obedience to God, who had given him this command, that he should lay down his life for sinners, it was a part of his righteousness, as truly as of his satisfaction.---These things may suffice to be observed in general concerning the purchase of redemption.

III. I now proceed to speak more particularly of those things which Christ did, and was the subject of during his humiliation, whereby this purchase was made.---And the nature of the purchase of Christ, as it has been explained, leads us to consider these things under a twofold view :---(1) With respect to his righteousness, which appeared in them ;---and (2) With respect to the sufferings and humiliation, which he was subject to in our stead.

1. I will consider the things that passed during the time of Christ's humiliation, with respect to the obedience that he exercised in them. And this is subject to a threefold distribution,---with respect to the laws which he obeyed,---the various stages of life in which he performed it,---and with respect to the several virtues he exercised.

The first distribution of the acts of Christ's righteousness is with respect to the laws which he obeyed. But all the precepts which Christ obeyed may be reduced to one law, which the apostle calls 'the law of works.' Rom. iii. 27. This indeed includes all the laws which God ever gave to mankind; for it is a general rule of the law of works, and indeed of the law of nature, that God is to be obeyed, and that he must be submitted to in whatever positive precept he is pleased to give. But more particularly, the commands which Christ obeyed were of three kinds; they were either such as he was subject to merely as Man, as a Jew, or purely as Mediator.---As Man he obeyed the moral law, which was the same with that which was given at Mount Sinai, which is obligatory on all mankind in all ages of the world.---As a Jew, he was subject to the ceremonial law, and was conformed to it in being circumcised the eighth day; and he strictly obeyed it in going up to Jerusalem to the temple three times a year; at least after he was come to the age of twelve years, which seems to have been the age when the males began to go up to the temple. Christ also constantly attended the service of the temple, and of the synagogues. To this head may be reduced, his submission to John's baptism; for it was a special command to the Jews, to go forth to John the Baptist, and be baptized of him; and therefore when Christ came to be baptized of John, and John objected, that he had more need to be baptized of him, he gives this reason in reply, that it was needful that he should do it, that he might 'fulfil all righteousness.' Matt. iii. 13---15.---Again, Christ was subject to the Mediatorial law, which contained those commands

of God to which he was subject, not merely as man, nor yet as a Jew, but which related purely to his mediatorial office. Such were the commands which the Father gave him, to teach such doctrines, to preach the gospel, to work such miracles, to call such disciples, to appoint such ordinances, and finally to lay down his life: for he did all these things in obedience to commands he had received of the Father, as he often tells us. John x. 18. xiv. 31.

And it is to be observed, that Christ's righteousness, by which he merited heaven for himself, and all who believe in him, consists principally in his obedience to this mediatorial law: for in fulfilling this law consisted his chief work and business in the world. What Christ had to do in the world as Mediator, was infinitely more difficult than what he had to do merely as a man, or as a Jew. To his obedience to this mediatorial law belongs his going through his last sufferings, beginning with his agony in the garden, and ending with his resurrection. As the obedience of the first Adam, wherein his righteousness would have consisted, if he had stood, would have principally consisted, not in his obedience to the moral law, to which he was subject merely as man, but in his obedience to that special law that he was subject to as moral head and surety of mankind, even the command of abstaining from the tree of knowledge of good and evil; so the obedience of the second Adam, wherein his righteousness consists, lies principally, not in his obedience to the law that he was subject to merely as man, but that special law to which he was subject in his office as Mediator and surety for man.

Before I proceed to the next distribution of Christ's righteousness, I would observe three things concerning his obedience to these laws.

(1) He performed that obedience to them, which was in every respect perfect; it was universal as to the laws to which he was subject, and every individual precept contained in them. It was per-

fect with respect to the principle from which he obeyed. This was wholly right; there was no corruption in his heart. It was perfect with respect to the ends for which he acted; for he never had any by-ends, but aimed perfectly at such as the law of God required. And it was perfect with respect to the constancy of his obedience: he held out to the end, through all the changes he passed through, and all the trials that he underwent.---The meritoriousness of Christ's obedience depends on the perfection of it. If it had failed in any instance, it could not have been meritorious; for that is not accepted as an obedience to a law which does not fully answer it.

(2) The next thing I would observe of Christ's obedience is, that it was performed through the greatest trials and temptations that ever any obedience was; and this rendered it still more meritorious and praise-worthy. To obey another when his commands are easy, is not so worthy, as it is to obey when it cannot be done without great difficulty.

(3) He performed this obedience with infinite respect to God, and the honour of his law. The obedience he performed was with infinitely greater love to God, and regard to his authority, than the angels possess. The angels perform their obedience with that love which is perfect, with sinless perfection. But Christ performed his obedience with much greater love than the angels do theirs, even infinite love; for though the human nature of Christ was not capable of love absolutely infinite, yet his obedience, which was performed in that human nature, is not to be considered as merely the obedience of the human nature, but the obedience of his person as God-man; and there was infinite love of the person of Christ manifest in that obedience. And this, together with the infinite dignity of the person that obeyed, rendered his obedience infinitely meritorious.

THE second distribution of the acts of Christ's obedience, relates to the different parts of his life, wherein they were performed. And in this respect they may be divided into those which were performed in private life, and those which were performed in his public ministry.

With regard to his Private Life, he was perfectly obedient even in his childhood. He infinitely differed from other children, who, as soon as they begin to act, begin to sin and rebel. He was subject to his earthly parents, though he was Lord of all; and was found about his Father's business at twelve years of age in the temple. Luke ii. 42, 51. He then began the work that he had to do in fulfilment of the mediatorial law, which the Father had given him. He continued his private life for about thirty years, dwelling at Nazareth in the house of his reputed father Joseph, where he served God in a private capacity, and in following a mechanical trade, the business of a carpenter.

Those acts which he performed during his Public Ministry, which began when he was about thirty years of age, and continued for the three last years and a half of his life. Most of the history of the evangelists is taken up in giving an account of what passed during this short period. Christ's first appearing in his public ministry, is what is often called his 'coming' in scripture. Thus John speaks of Christ's coming as what is yet to be, though he had been born long before.---Concerning the public ministry of Christ, observe the following things.

(1) The forerunner of Christ's coming in his public ministry was John the Baptist: he came preaching repentance for the remission of sins, to make way for Christ's coming, agreeable to the prophecies of him. Isai. xl. 3--5. Matt. iv. 5, 6. It is supposed that John the Baptist began his ministry about three years and a half before Christ; so that John's ministry and Christ's put together, made seven years, which was the last of Daniel's weeks.

‘ He will confirm the covenant with many for one week.’ Christ came in the midst of this week, viz. in the beginning of the last half of it, or the last three years and a half, as Daniel foretold, as in the verse just now quoted: ‘ And in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.’ Dan ix. 27.

John Baptist’s ministry consisted principally in preaching the law, to awaken men and convince them of sin; to prepare them for the coming of Christ, and to comfort them, as the law is intended to prepare the heart for the entertainment of the gospel.—A very remarkable outpouring of the Spirit of God attended John’s ministry; and the effect of it was, that Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, were awakened, convinced, and submitted to his baptism, confessing their sins. John is spoken of as the greatest of all the prophets who came before Christ. Matt. xi. 11. ‘ Among those that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist;’ that is, he had the most honourable office. He was as the morning star, which is the harbinger of the approaching day, and the forerunner of the rising sun. The other prophets were stars to give light in the night; and we have heard how those stars went out on the approach of the gospel day. But now the coming of Christ being very nigh, the morning star comes before him, the brightest of all the stars, as John the Baptist was the greatest of all the prophets.

And when Christ came in his public ministry, the light of the morning star decreased too; as ye see when the sun rises, it diminishes the light of the morning star. So John the Baptist says of himself. ‘ He must increase, but I must decrease.’ And soon after Christ began his public ministry, John the Baptist was put to death; as the morning star is visible a little while after the sun is risen, yet soon goes out.

(2) The next thing to be taken notice of is Christ's entrance on his public ministry, which was by baptism, followed with the temptation in the wilderness. His baptism was, as it were, his solemn inauguration, by which he entered on his ministry, and was attended with his being anointed with the Holy Ghost, in a solemn and visible manner, the Holy Ghost descending upon him in a visible shape like a dove, attended with a voice from heaven, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' Matt. iii. 16, 17.

After this he was led by the devil into the wilderness. Satan made a violent onset upon him at his first entrance on his work; and now he had a remarkable trial of his obedience, but he got the victory. He who had such success with the first Adam, had none with the second.

(3) The work in which Christ was employed during his ministry; and here are three things chiefly to be taken notice of, viz. his preaching, his working of miracles, and his calling and appointing disciples and ministers of his kingdom.

His Preaching the Gospel. Great part of the work of his public ministry consisted in this; and much of that obedience by which he purchased salvation for us, was in his speaking those things which the Father commanded him. He more clearly and abundantly revealed the mind and will of God, than ever it had been before. He came from the bosom of the Father, and perfectly knew his mind, and was in the best capacity to reveal it. The sun, as soon as it is risen, begins to shine; and so Christ, as soon as he came into his public ministry, began to enlighten the world with his doctrine. As the law was given at mount Sinai, so Christ delivered his evangelical doctrine, full of blessings, and not curses, to a multitude on a mountain. Matt. v. vi. vii. When he preached, he did not teach as the scribes, but as one having authority, so that his hearers were astonished at his doctrine. He did not reveal the mind and will of God in the style of

the prophets, 'Thus saith the Lord;' but, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you.' He delivered his doctrines, not only as the doctrines of the Father, but as his own. He gave forth his commands, not as the prophets were wont to do, merely as God's commands, but as his own. 'This is my commandment—Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.' John xv. 12, 14.

Another thing that Christ was employed in, during the course of his ministry, was working Miracles. Concerning which we may observe, that they were abundant. Besides particular instances, we often have an account of multitudes coming at once with diseases, and his healing them.—They were works of mercy. He went about doing good, healing the sick, restoring sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and the proper use of their limbs to the lame and halt; feeding the hungry, cleansing the leprous, and raising the dead.—They were almost all of them such as had been spoken of as the peculiar works of God, in the Old Testament. Such were stilling the waves of the sea, Psal. cvii. 29. Walking on the sea in a storm, Job ix. 8. Casting out devils, Psal. lxxiv. 14. Feeding a multitude in a wilderness, Deut. viii. 16. Discerning men's thoughts, Amos iv. 13. Raising the dead, Psal. lxxviii. 20. Opening the eyes of the blind, Psal. cxlvi. 8. Healing the sick, Psal. ciii. 3. And lifting up those who are bowed together, Psal. cxlvi. 8.—They were in general such miracles as were images of the great work which he came to work on men's hearts; representing that inward, spiritual cleansing, healing, renovation and resurrection, which all his redeemed are the subjects of.—He wrought them in such a manner as to show, that he did them by his own power, and not by the power of another, as the other prophets did. They were used to work all their miracles in the name of the Lord; but Christ wrought in his own name. Moses was forbidden to enter into Canaan, because he seemed by his speech to assume to himself the honour of working only one

miracle. Numb. xx. 8---13. Nor did Christ work miracles as the apostles did, who wrought them all in the name of Christ ; but he wrought them in his own name, and by his own authority and will. Thus, saith he, ' I will, be thou clean.' Matt. viii. 3. And in the same strain he put the question, ' Believe ye that I am able to do this ?' Matt. ix. 28.

Another thing that Christ did in the course of his ministry, was to call his disciples. He called many disciples, whom he employed as ministers. He sent seventy at one time into his work ; but there were twelve that he set apart as apostles, who were the grand ministers of his kingdom, and as it were the twelve foundations of his church. Rev. xxi. 14. These were the main instruments of setting up his kingdom in the world, and therefore they shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Matt. xix. 28.

(4) I would observe how he finished his ministry. And this was, in giving his dying counsel to his disciples, which we have recorded in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth chapters of John's gospel.---In instituting a solemn memorial of his death, namely, the sacrament of the Lord's supper, wherein we have a representation of his body broken, and of his blood shed.---In offering up himself, without blemish, a sacrifice to God, which he did in his last sufferings, as God's anointed priest. This was the greatest act of his public ministry, and indeed of his obedience. The priests of old used to do many other things as God's ministers : but were then in the highest execution of their office, when they were offering sacrifices on the altar. So the greatest thing that Christ did in the execution of his priestly office, and indeed the greatest thing that ever was done, was the offering up himself a sacrifice to God. Herein he was the antitype of all that had been done by all the priests, in all their sacrifices and offerings, from the beginning of the world.

3. The third distribution of the acts by which Christ purchased redemption, regards the Virtues

that he exercised and manifested in them, which were every possible virtue and grace. Indeed there are some particular virtues that sinful man may have, that were not in Christ; not from any want or defect of virtue, but because his virtue was perfect and without defect. Such are repentance, brokenness of heart for sin, and mortification of lust. Those virtues were not in Christ, because he had no sin of his own to repent of, nor any lust to deny. But all virtues which do not presuppose sin, were in him, and that in a higher degree than ever they were in any other man, or any mere creature. Every virtue in him was perfect, virtue itself was greater in him than in any other; and it was under greater advantages to shine in him than in any other. Strict virtue shines most when most tried; but never any virtue had such trials as Christ's had.---The virtues which he exercised may be divided into three sorts, those which more immediately respect God, himself, and other men.

Those virtues which more immediately respect God, appeared in the work which Christ did for our redemption. There appeared in him an holy fear and reverence towards God the Father. Christ had a greater trial of his virtue in this respect than any other had, from the honourableness of his person. This was the temptation of the angels that fell, to cast off their worship of God, and reverence of his majesty, that they were beings of such exalted dignity and worthiness themselves. 1 Tim. iii. 6. But Christ was infinitely more worthy and honourable than they; for he was the eternal Son of God, and his person was equal to the person of God the Father: and yet, as he had taken on him the office of mediator, and the nature of man, he was full of reverence towards God. He adored him in the most reverential manner, time after time. So he manifested a wonderful love towards God. The angels give great testimony of their love towards God, in their constancy and agility in doing his will; and many saints have given great testimonies of their

love to God, by having endured great labours and sufferings. But none ever gave such testimonies of love to God as Christ has; none ever performed such a labour of love as he did, or suffered so much from love to God. Thus also he manifested the most wonderful submission to the will of God; never was any one's submission so tried as his was.

In this work he most wonderfully manifested those virtues which more immediately respected Himself; particularly his humility, patience, and contempt of the world. Though Christ was the most excellent and honourable of all, yet was he the most humble of all men, yea, of all creatures. No angel or man ever equalled him in humility, though he was the highest of all in dignity and honour. Christ would have been under the greatest temptation to pride, if it had been possible for any thing to have tempted him. The temptations of the angels that fell was the dignity of their nature, and the honourableness of their circumstances; but Christ was infinitely more honourable than they. His human nature was so honoured as to be in the same person with the eternal Son of God, who was equal with God; and yet that human nature was not at all lifted up with pride. Nor was the man Christ Jesus at all lifted up with pride, with all those wonderful works which he wrought, of healing the sick, curing the blind, lame and maimed, and raising the dead. And though he knew that God had appointed him to be king over heaven and earth, angels and men, and that 'all things were delivered unto him by the Father;' though he knew he was such an infinitely honourable person, and 'thought it not robbery to be equal with God;' and though he knew he was the heir of God the Father's kingdom; yet such was his humility, that he did not disdain to be abased and depressed down into lower and viler circumstances and sufferings than ever any other elect creature was, so that he became the least and lowest of all. The proper trial and evidence of humility is stooping or complying with those acts or circum-

stances, when called to it, which are very low, and contain great abasement. But none ever stooped so low as Christ, if we consider his infinite dignity, and the depth of his abasement. Such was his humility, that though he knew himself to be infinitely worthy of being honoured ten thousand times more than the highest prince on earth, or angel in heaven; yet he did not think it too much when called to it, to be bound as a cursed malefactor, to become the laughing-stock of the vilest of men, to be crowned with thorns, to have a mock robe put upon him, and to be crucified like a slave or malefactor, as one of the meanest and worst of vagabonds and miscreants, and an accursed enemy of God and man, who was not fit to live on the earth; and this not for himself, but for some of the meanest and vilest of creatures, even of those who crucified him. Was not this a wonderful manifestation of humility, when he cheerfully and most freely submitted to this abasement? How did his patience shine forth under all the terrible sufferings which he endured, when he was dumb, and opened not his mouth, but went as a lamb to the slaughter, and was patient under all the sufferings he endured from first to last. What contempt of the glory of the world was there, when he rather chose this meanness and suffering, than to wear a temporal crown, and be invested with the external glories of an earthly prince, as the multitude often solicited him.

Christ, in the work which he wrought out, in a wonderful manner exercised those virtues which have a more immediate respect to others; and these may be summed up under two heads, meekness, and love. Christ's meekness was his humble calmness of spirit under the provocations he met with. None ever met with so great provocations as he did. The greatness of provocation lies in two things, the degree of opposition by which the provocation is given, and in the degree of the unreasonableness of that opposition, or in its being not only without reason, but against the greatest degree of obligation to the

contrary. Now, if we consider both these things, no one ever met with a thousandth part of the provocation that Christ met with from men ; and yet how meek was he under all, how composed and quiet his spirit, how far from being in a ruffle and tumult. When he was reviled, he reviled not again ; but ‘ as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.’ No appearance was there of a revengeful spirit : on the contrary, what a spirit of forgiveness did he exhibit ! He fervently and effectually prayed for the forgiveness of his enemies, when they were in the highest act of provocation that they ever perpetrated, even nailing him to the cross. Luke xxiii. 34. ‘ Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.’ Never did there appear such an instance of love to men, as he showed when on earth, especially in going through his last sufferings, and offering up his life and soul for them. There had been very remarkable manifestations of love in some of the saints, as in the apostles, Paul, John, and others ; but the love that Christ showed them on earth, as much exceeded the love of all other men, as the ocean exceeds a small stream.

It is also to be observed, that all the virtues which appeared in Christ shone brightest in the close of his life, under the trials he then met with. Eminent virtue always appears brightest in the fire, as pure gold shows its purity chiefly in the furnace. It was chiefly under those trials which Christ underwent in the close of his life, that his love to God, his regard to the honour of his law, his spirit of obedience, humility, and contempt of the world, his patience, meekness, forgiveness towards men, appeared. Indeed every thing that Christ did to work out redemption for us appears chiefly in the close of his life. Here chiefly are to be seen the merit of his satisfaction, and the brightness of his example.

Thus we have taken a brief view of the things whereby the purchase of redemption was made, with respect to his righteousness that appeared in them.
---I proceed now,

IV. To take a view of them with respect to the satisfaction that he thereby made for sin, or the sufferings and humiliation that he endured on our account. And here,

(1) He was subject to uncommon humiliation and suffering in his infancy. He was born to that end, that he might die ; and therefore he did as it were begin to die as soon as he was born. His mother suffered in an uncommon manner, as to the treatment she met with at Bethlehem. When her travail came upon her, it is said, ‘ there was no room in the inn.’ Luke ii. 7. She was forced to betake herself to a stable ; and therefore Christ was born in the place of the bringing forth of beasts. Thus he suffered in his birth, as though he had been meaner and viler than man, and not possessed of the dignity of human nature, but had been of the rank of the brute creation. And we may conclude, that his mother’s circumstances in other respects were proportionably strait and difficult, and that she was destitute of the conveniences necessary for so young an infant, which others were wont to have ; for want of which the new-born babe without doubt suffered much.

Besides, he was persecuted even in his infancy : they began to seek his life as soon as he was born. Herod was so desirous to kill him, that in order to it, he killed all the children in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under. Matt. ii. 16. Christ also suffered banishment in his infancy, was driven out of his native country into Egypt, and without doubt suffered much by being carried so long a journey, when he was so young, into a strange country.

(2) Christ was subject to great humiliation in his private life at Nazareth : he there led a servile obscure life, in a mean laborious occupation ; for he is called not only the carpenter’s son, but the carpenter. Mark vi. 3. ‘ Is not this the carpenter, the brother of James and Joses, and Judah, and Simeon ?’ By hard labour he earned his bread before he ate it,

and so suffered that curse which God pronounced on Adam : ' In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.' Let us consider how great a degree of humiliation the glorious Son of God, the creator of heaven and earth, was subject to in this, that for about thirty years he should live a private obscure life, and all this while be overlooked, and not more regarded than other labouring men. Christ's humiliation in this respect was greater in his private life, than in the time of his public ministry. There were many manifestations of his glory in the word he preached, and the great miracles he wrought : but the first thirty years of his life he spent among mean, ordinary men, as it were in silence, without those manifestations of his glory, or any thing to distinguish him except the spotless purity and eminent holiness of his life ; and that was in a great measure hid in obscurity, so that he was little taken notice of till after his baptism.

(3) Christ was the subject of great humiliation and suffering during his public life, from his baptism till the night wherein he was betrayed.* Particularly,

He suffered great poverty, so that he had not ' where to lay his head.' He commonly used to lodge abroad in the open air, for want of a shelter to betake himself to. Compare the following places together. Matt. viii. 20. John xviii. 1, 2. Luke xxi. 37. xxii. 39. So that what was spoken of Christ in Canticles v. 2, ' My head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night,' was literally fulfilled. And through this poverty he was doubtless often pinched with hunger, and thirst, and cold.

* If hunger and thirst, if revilings and contempt, if sorrows and agonies, if stripes and buffetings, if condemnation and crucifixion, be suffering, Jesus suffered. If the infirmities of our nature, if the weight of our sins, if the malice of man, if the machinations of Satan, if the hand of God, could make him suffer, our Saviour suffered. If the annals of time, if the writings of his apostles, if the death of his martyrs, if the confession of Gentiles, if the scrolls of the Jews be testimonies, Jesus suffered. Nor was there ever any who thought he did not really and truly suffer, but such as pretended that he was not really and truly man.

See Matt. iv. 2. xxi. 18. His mother and natural relations were poor, and not able to help him; and he was maintained by the charity of some of his disciples while he lived. Luke viii. 2, 3. 'Certain women that followed him, ministered to him of their substance.' He was so poor, that he was not able to pay the tribute that was demanded of him, without a miracle. Matt. xvii. 27. And when he ate his last passover, it was not at his own charge, but at the charge of another. Luke xxii. 7. Also from his poverty he had no grave of his own to be buried in. It was the manner of the Jews, unless they were very poor, to prepare themselves a sepulchre while they lived; but Christ had no land of his own, though he was possessor of heaven and earth. Therefore he was buried by Joseph of Arimathea's charity, and in his tomb, which he had prepared for himself.

He suffered great hatred and reproach. 'He was despised and rejected of men.' He was by most esteemed a poor insignificant person, one of little account, slighted for his low parentage, and his mean city, Nazareth. He was reproached as a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of publicans and sinners; was called a deceiver of the people, sometimes a madman, a Samaritan, and one possessed with a devil. John vii. 20. viii. 48. x. 20. He was called a blasphemer, and accounted by many a wizzard, or one that wrought miracles by the black art, and by communication with Beelzebub. They excommunicated him, and agreed to excommunicate any man that should own him. John ix. 22. They wished him dead, and were continually seeking to murder him; sometimes by force, and sometimes by craft. They often took up stones to stone him, and once led him to the brow of a hill, intending to throw him down the precipice, to dash him to pieces against the rocks. Luke iv. 29. He was thus hated and reproached by his own visible people. John i. 11. 'He came to his own, and his own received him not.' And he was principally despised and hated

by those who were in chief repute, and were the greatest men. But into whatever part of the land he went, he met with hatred and contempt. He met with these in Capernaum, and when he went to Jericho. At Jerusalem, which was the holy city, when he went to the temple to worship. Also in Nazareth, his own city, and among his own relations and neighbours.

He suffered the buffetings of Satan in an uncommon manner. We read of one time in particular, when he had a long conflict with the devil, when he was in the wilderness forty days, with nothing but wild beasts and devils; and was so exposed to the devil's power, that he was bodily carried about by him from place to place, while he was otherwise in a very suffering state. Matt. iv. 1---11.*

(4) I come now to the evening of the night wherein he was betrayed. And from this time was his greatest humiliation and suffering, by which principally he made satisfaction to the justice of God for the sins of men. First, his life was sold by one of his own disciples for thirty pieces of silver, which was the price of the life of a servant. Exod. xxi. 32. Then he was in such a dreadful agony in the garden, that there came such a horror upon his soul, that he began to be sorrowful and very heavy, and

* Some ingenious writers, to avoid the difficulties of a literal interpretation, have reduced the whole of this to vision and allegory, and thus involved the subject in greater difficulty. The best way to avoid difficulties on this, and many other parts of sacred writ, is to adhere as close as possible to the language of inspiration, since the additions of puzzled commentators often add absurdity to remove doubts. That when our Lord retired to the interior part of the wilderness, the enemy of mankind should assume a disguise, (whether human or angelic, is not important) and present the most plausible temptation to our Redeemer under these trying circumstances, is perfectly consistent with the malevolence of his character; but how far he was permitted to exert his power in forming them, is not necessary to be inquired. The grand objection is, why was Satan suffered thus to insult the Son of God? Wherefore did the Redeemer suffer his state of retirement to be thus disturbed, with the malicious suggestions of the fiend? The great apostle furnishes an answer, equally pertinent and consolatory—'He was tempted in all points like as we are—that he might be touched with the feeling of our infirmities—and himself having suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.' Heb. ii. 18. iv. 15.

said, his 'soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, and was sore amazed.' Mark xiv. 33, 34.* So violent was the agony of his soul, as to force the blood through the pores of his skin; so that he was overwhelmed with amazing sorrow, his body was covered with blood. The disciples, who used to be his friends and family, now appear cold and unconcerned, at the time his Father's face is hid from him. Judas, whom he had treated as one of his family, or familiar friends, comes and betrays him in the most deceitful, treacherous manner. The officers and soldiers apprehend and bind him. His disciples forsake him and flee, instead of comforting him in his distress. He is led as a malefactor before the priests and scribes, his mortal enemies, that they might set as his judges; and they set up all night, to enjoy the pleasure of insulting him, now they had got him into their hands. But because they aimed at nothing short of his life, they set themselves to find some colour to put him to death, and seek for witnesses against him. When none appeared, they employed some to bear false witness; and when their witness did not agree together, then they examined him, to catch something out of his own mouth. They hoped he would say, that he was the Son of God, and then they thought they should have enough. And when he was silent they adjured him in the name of God, to say whether he was or not. When he confessed this, they supposed they had enough; then it was a time of rejoicing with them, which they show by insulting him, spitting in his face, blindfolding and buffeting him, and then bidding him prophesy who it was that struck him; thus ridiculing him for pre-

* To heighten our idea of this distress, the evangelists make use of the most forcible words: 'He was seized with the most alarming astonishment, or overwhelmed with insupportable dejection. He was besieged on all sides, as it were with an army of invading sorrows. He wrestled, amidst strong cries and tears, not only with the malice of men and rage of devils, but with the infinitely more dreaded indignation of God: he wrestled even unto an agony of spirit.' All these circumstances of horror and anguish constitute what a celebrated poet very justly stiles,

'A weight of woe, more than ten worlds can bear.'

tending to be a prophet. The very servants also have a hand in the cruel sport, and they strike him with the palms of their hands. Mark xiv. 65.

During the sufferings of that night, Peter, one of the chief of his own disciples, appears ashamed to own him, and denies and renounces him with oaths and curses. And after the chief priests and elders had finished the night in so shamefully abusing him, when the morning was come, which was the morning of the most wonderful day that ever was, they led him away to Pilate, to be condemned to death by him, because they had not the power of life and death in their own hands. He is brought before Pilate's judgment seat, and there the priests and elders accuse him as a traitor. And when Pilate, upon examining into the matter, declared that he found no fault in him, the Jews were the more fierce and violent to have him condemned. Pilate, therefore, after clearing him, very unjustly brings him to a second trial; and then not finding any thing against him, acquits him again. Pilate treats him as a poor worthless fellow; but is ashamed on so little pretense to condemn him as a traitor.

Afterwards he was sent to Herod to be tried by him, and was brought before his judgment seat; his enemies following, and virulently accusing him as a traitor, or one that would set up for a king; but he considers him as Pilate did, as a poor creature, not worthy to be taken notice of, and only makes a jest of the Jews, accusing him as a dangerous person to Cæsar, as one that was in danger of setting up to be a king against him. Therefore in derision, he dresses him in a mock robe, makes sport of him, and sends him back with it through the streets of Jerusalem to Pilate.

Then the Jews prefer Barabbas before him, and are instant and violent with loud voices to Pilate, to crucify him. So Pilate after he had cleared him twice, and Herod once, very unrighteously brings him on trial the third time. Christ was stripped and scourged: thus he gave his 'back to the smiters.'

Isai. l. 6. After that, though Pilate still declared that he found no fault in him; yet so unjust was he, that for fear of the Jews he delivered him to be crucified. But before they execute the sentence, his spiteful and cruel enemies again insult and torture him. They strip him, and put on him a scarlet robe, place a reed in his hand, and a crown of thorns on his head. Both Jews and Roman soldiers were united in the transaction; they bow their knees before him, and in derision cry, 'Hail, King of the Jews.' They spit upon him also, and took the reed out of his hand, and smote him on the head. After this they led him away to crucify him, and made him carry his own cross, till he sunk under it, his strength being spent; and then they laid it on one Simon a Cyrenian. Mat. xxvii. 32.

At length, being come to Mount Calvary, they execute the sentence which Pilate had so unrighteously pronounced. They nailed him to the cross by his hands and feet, then raise it erect, and fix one end in the ground, he being still suspended on it by the nails which pierced his hands and feet. And now Christ's sufferings are come to the extremity; now the cup which he so earnestly prayed that it might pass from him, is come, and he must, he does drink it. Isai. xxvi. 39. In those days crucifixion was the most tormenting death by which any were executed. There was no death in which a person experienced so much torment; and hence the Roman word which signifies torment, is taken from this kind of death.---Besides what our Lord endured in this excruciating death in his body, he endured vastly more in his soul. Now was that travail of his soul, of which we read in the prophet. Now it pleased God to bruise him, and to put him to grief; now 'he poured out his soul unto death.' Isai. liii. 10. And if the mere forethought of this cup made him sweat blood, how much more dreadful and excruciating must the drinking of it have been! Many martyrs have endured much in their bodies, while their souls have been joyful, and have

sung for joy, whereby they have been supported under the sufferings of the outward man, and have triumphed over them. But this was not the case with Christ; he had no such support; but his sufferings were chiefly those of the mind, though the others were extremely great.

Under all these sufferings, the Jews still mock him; and wagging their heads say, 'Thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.' Matt. xxvii. 40. Even the chief priests, scribes, and elders, joined in the cry, saying, 'He saved others, himself he cannot save.*' And probably the devil at the same time tormented him to the utmost of his power; for this was the hour, and the power of darkness. Luke xxii. 53.

Under these sufferings, Christ having cried out once and again with a loud voice, at last he said, 'It is finished, and bowed the head, and gave up the ghost.' John xix. 30. Thus was finished the greatest work that ever was done; now the angels beheld the most wonderful sight that ever was seen, now was accomplished the main thing that had been pointed at by the various institutions of the ceremonial law, by all the typical dispensations, and by all the sacrifices from the beginning of the world.

Christ being thus brought under the power of death, continued under it till the morning of the next day but one; † and then was finished that great

* So Celsus, that bitter enemy of Christianity, tauntingly cries, 'Why, in the name of wonder, does he not, on this occasion, at least, act the God? Why does he not deliver himself from this shocking ignominy, or execute some signal vengeance on the author of such impious and abusive insults, both of himself and his Father?'—Why, Celsus? Because on his death depends the salvation of mankind, and thereby is purchased that pardon which the gospel proclaims to sinners, such as Celsus.

† During this period, some have supposed our Lord descended below the grave, and 'preached to the spirits,'—either in purgatory, or even hell itself. The two former of these opinions have been maintained by popish writers, and sufficiently answered by protestants: but the latter notion supposes that Christ after his death went down among the damned, preached salvation there, and actually converted and delivered many of the unhappy spirits therein confined. The text here

work, the purchase of our redemption, for which such great preparation had been made from the beginning of the world. Then was finished all that was required in order to fulfil the threatenings of the law, and all that was necessary in order to satisfy divine justice; then the utmost that vindictive justice demanded, even the whole debt was paid. Then was finished the whole of the purchase of eternal life.

IMPROVEMENT OF PERIOD II

In surveying the history of redemption, we have now shown how this work was carried on through

alluded to is 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20; but against this extraordinary opinion, the following objections appear to be important and decisive.

(1) The Spirit 'by which he went and preached,' was not Christ's human soul, but a divine nature, or rather the Holy Spirit, by which he was quickened, and raised from the dead.

(2) Christ when on the cross promised the penitent thief his presence that day in paradise; and accordingly when he died, committed his soul into his heavenly Father's hand. In heaven therefore, and not in hell, we are to seek the separate spirit of our Redeemer at this period. Luke xxiii. 43, 46.

(3) Had our Lord descended to preach salvation to the damned, there is no supposable reason why the unbelievers in Noah's time only should be mentioned, rather than those of Sodom and the unhappy multitude who died in sin.

(4) Granting the fact, that our Saviour descended into hell, we have no intimation of his preaching being attended with any more success than that of his servant Noah. Some indeed were raised from the dead at this time, and no doubt these would have been taken for some of the unhappy spirits released, and permitted to return to earth, had not the scriptures expressly told us that they were the bodies of saints. Matt. xxvii. 52.

(5) So far from any intimation of such deliverance, St. Jude, subsequent to this, mentions the sinners of Sodom suffering the vengeance of eternal fire: and both the apostles, Jude and Peter, mention the Sodomites, the Israelites that perished for their rebellion in the wilderness, the fallen angels, and impenitent sinners in general, as involved in one common ruin, and reserved to the 'day of judgment to be punished;' and the latter includes the inhabitants of the old world among the rest. Jude 5-8. 2 Pet. ii. 4-9.

(6) Our Lord is express, that 'he that believeth shall never come into condemnation—shall never perish;' and 'he that believeth not, shall not see life,—not come where He is. John iii. 36. v. 24. viii. 21.

(7) The apostle, describing the resurrection of Christ, says, that 'he spoiled principalities and powers—made a show of them openly.' Col. ii. 15. But he adds nothing of the souls delivered from hell, though he would hardly have omitted such a fact, had it been true.

the two first periods into which we divided it, from the fall to the incarnation of Christ, and from thence to the end of the time of Christ's humiliation; and have particularly explained how in the first of these periods God prepared the way for Christ's appearing and purchasing redemption; and how, in the second period, that purchase was made and finished. I would now add some improvement of what has been said on both these subjects in conjunction.

1. I begin with an use of reproof; a reproof of three things; of unbelief, self-righteousness, and a careless neglect of the salvation of Christ.

(1) If the things above particularly recited be true, how greatly do they reprove those who do not believe in, and heartily receive the Lord Jesus Christ. Persons may receive him in profession, and may wish that they had some of those benefits that Christ has purchased, and yet their hearts not receive him. They may be sincere in nothing that they do towards him; they may have no high esteem of him, nor any real respect to him. Though their hearts have been opened wide to others, yet Christ has always been shut out, and they have been deaf to all his invitations. They never found an inclination of heart to receive him, nor would they ever trust in him.

Let me now call upon you to consider how great your sin, in thus rejecting Jesus Christ, appears to be from what has now been said. You slight the glorious Person, for whose coming God made such great preparations in such a series of wonderful providences from the beginning of the world, and who, after all things were made ready, God sent into the world, bringing to pass a thing before unknown,—the union of the divine and human nature in one person. You have been guilty of slighting that great Saviour, who, after such preparation, actually accomplished the purchase of redemption; and who, after he had spent three or four and thirty years in poverty, labour and contempt, in purchasing redemption, at last finished the purchase by closing

his life under such extreme sufferings as you have heard; and so by his death, and continuing for a time under the power of death, completed the whole. This is the Saviour you reject and despise. You make light of all the glory of his person, and all the love of the Father in sending him into the world, and the Son's compassion in the whole of this affair. That precious stone that God hath laid in Zion for a foundation in such a manner, and by such wonderful works as you have heard, is a stone set at nought by you.

Sinners sometimes are ready to wonder why unbelief should be looked upon as so great a sin: but if you consider what you have heard, how can you wonder. If Christ be so great a Saviour, and his work so great, and such great things have been done in order to it, truly there is no cause of wonder that the rejection of this Saviour is spoken of in scripture as a sin so provoking to God, and attended with greater aggravations than the worst sins of the heathen, who never heard of those things, nor have had this Saviour offered to them.

(2) What has been said affords matter of reproof to those who, instead of believing in Christ, trust in themselves for salvation. It is a common thing with men to trust in their prayers, their good conversation, the pains they take in religion, the reformation of their lives, and in their self-denial, to make some atonement for their sins, and to recommend themselves to God.

Consider three things:

[1] How great a thing that is which you take upon you. Though you are poor, worthless, polluted worms of the dust; yet so arrogant are you, that you take upon you that work which the only-begotten Son of God became man to capacitate himself for, and in order to which God made so great preparation. Consider how vain is the thought which you entertain of yourself; how must such arrogance appear in the sight of Christ, whom it cost so much to make a purchase of salvation, when

it was not to be obtained even by him, so great and glorious a person, at a cheaper rate than his wading through a sea of blood, and passing through the midst of the furnace of God's wrath.

[2] If there be ground for you to trust, as you do, in your own righteousness, then all that Christ did to purchase salvation when on earth, and all that God did from the fall of man to that time to prepare the way for it, is in vain. Your self-righteousness charges God with the greatest folly, in that he has done all this to bring about an accomplishment of what you alone, a little worm, with your poor polluted services, are sufficient to accomplish. For if you can appease God's anger, and can commend yourself to him by these means, then you have no need of Christ; but he has died in vain. Gal. ii. 21. 'If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.' Alas, how blind are natural men, how vain are the thoughts they have of themselves, how ignorant of their own littleness and pollution! How do they exalt themselves up to heaven, and what great things do they assume to themselves!

[3] You that trust to your own righteousness, arrogate to yourselves the honour of the greatest thing that ever God himself did; not only as if you were sufficient to perform divine works, and to accomplish some of the great works of God; but such is your pride and vanity, that you are not content without taking upon you to do the greatest work that ever God himself wrought, even the work of redemption. To work out redemption is a greater thing than to create a world. Consider what a figure you would make, if you should attempt to deck yourself with majesty, pretend to speak the word of power, and call a universe out of nothing; yet in pretending to work out redemption, you attempt a greater thing. You take upon you to do the most difficult part of this work, even to purchase redemption. Christ could accomplish other parts of this work without cost or difficulty; but this part cost him his life,

as well as innumerable pains and labours, very great ignominy and contempt. If all the angels in heaven had been sufficient for this work, would God have sent his own Son, the Creator of angels, into the world, to have done and suffered such things? What self-righteous persons take to themselves, is the same work that Christ was engaged in when he was in his agony and bloody sweat, and when he died on the cross. Their self-righteousness does, in effect, charge Christ's offering up himself in these sufferings, as the greatest instance of folly that ever men or angels saw, instead of being the most glorious display of the divine wisdom and grace. Yea, self-righteousness makes all that Christ did and suffered through the whole course of his life, with all that God did in the dispensations of his providence from the beginning, nothing but a scene of the most wild, extreme, and transcendent folly. Is it any wonder then, that a self-righteous spirit is represented in scripture as that which is most fatal to the souls of men? Or that Christ was so provoked with the pharisees and others, who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and were proud of their goodness, and thought that their own performances were a valuable price of God's favour and love?

Let persons hence be warned against a self-righteous spirit. You that are seeking salvation, and taking pains in religion, take heed that you do not trust in what you do; that you do not harbour any thoughts, that God ought to accept of what you do, so as to be inclined by it in some measure to forgive you, and have mercy upon you; or that he does not act justly, if he refuse to regard your prayers and pains. Such complaining of God, and quarrelling with him, for not taking more notice of your righteousness, plainly shows that you are guilty of all that arrogance that has been spoken of, thinking yourself sufficient to offer the price of your own salvation.

(3) What has been said on this subject, affords

matter of reproof to those who carelessly neglect the salvation of Christ ; such as live a sensual life, neglecting the business of religion, and the salvation of their own souls, having their minds taken up about the gains, the vanities, and pleasures of the world. Let me here apply myself to you in some expostulatory interrogations.

[1] Shall so many prophets, kings and righteous men, have their minds taken up with the prospect, that the purchase of salvation was to be wrought out in ages long after their death ; and will you neglect it when actually accomplished ? You have heard what great account the church in all ages made of the future redemption of Christ ; how joyfully they expected and spoke of it. How much did Isaiah, Daniel, and other prophets, speak concerning this redemption. How did David employ his voice and harp in celebrating it, and the glorious display of divine grace therein exhibited. How did Abraham and the other patriarchs rejoice in the prospect of Christ's day, and the redemption which he was to purchase. And even the saints before the flood were elated in the expectation of this glorious event, though it was then so long future, so faintly and obscurely revealed to them. Now these things are declared to you as actually fulfilled. The church has seen accomplished all those great things which they so joyfully foretold. And yet, when these things are set before you as already accomplished, how light do you make of them ; how unconcerned are you about them, following other things, not so much as feeling any interest in them ! Indeed your sin is extremely aggravated in the sight of God. God has put you under a more glorious dispensation, has given you a more clear revelation of Christ and his salvation ; and yet you neglect all these advantages, and go on in a careless course of life, as though nothing had been done, no such discovery had been made you.

[2] Have the angels been so engaged about this salvation ever since the fall of man, though they are

not immediately concerned in it; and will you who need it, and have it offered to you, be so careless about it? You have heard how the angels at first were subjected to Christ as mediator, and how they have all along been ministering spirits to him in this affair. And when Christ came, how were their minds engaged. They came to Zacharias, to inform him of the coming of Christ's forerunner; to the virgin Mary, to inform her of the approaching birth of Christ; to Joseph, to warn him of the danger which threatened the new-born Saviour, and to point out the means of safety. And at the birth of Christ, the whole multitude of the heavenly hosts sang praises upon the occasion, saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will towards men.' Afterwards, from time to time, they ministered to Christ when on earth; they did so at the time of his temptation, at the time of his agony in the garden, at his resurrection, and at his ascension. All these things show that they were greatly engaged in this affair; and the scripture informs us, that they pry into these things. 'Which things the angels desire to look into.' 1 Pet. i. 12. And how are they represented in the Revelation, as being employed in heaven in singing praises to Him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb. Now, shall these take so much notice of his redemption, and of the purchaser, who need it not for themselves, and have no immediate interest in it; and will you, who are in such extreme necessity, neglect and take no notice of it?

[3] Did Christ labour so hard and suffer so much, to procure this salvation, and is it not worth while for you to be at some labour in seeking it? Did our salvation lie with such weight on the mind of Christ as to induce him to become man, and to suffer even death itself, in order to procure it for us; and is it not worth while for you who need this salvation, and must perish eternally without it, to take earnest pains to obtain an interest in it after it is procured, and all things are ready?

[4] Shall the great God be so concerned about this salvation, as often to overturn the world to make way for it : and when all was done, is it not worth your seeking after ? What great, what wonderful things has the Lord of heaven and earth done from one age to another, casting down and setting up kings, raising up a great number of prophets, separating a distinct nation from the rest of the world, overturning one kingdom and another, and often the state of the world ; and so has continued bringing about one change and revolution after another, for forty centuries in succession, to make way for the procuring of this salvation. And when he had done all ; is it not worthy of your being concerned about it, but that it should be thrown by, and made nothing of, in comparison of worldly gain, youthful diversions, and other such trifling things ? Oh that you who live negligent of this salvation, would consider what you do ! What you have heard from this subject, may show you what reason there is in that exclamation of the apostle : ‘ How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation—Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish : for I work a work in your days, a work which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.’ Heb. ii. 3. Acts xiii. 41. God looks on such as you as great enemies of the cross of Christ, and adversaries and despisers of all the glory of this great work. And if God has made such account of the glory of salvation as to destroy many nations, and so often overturn all nations, to prepare the way for the glory of his Son in this affair ; how little account will he make of the lives and souls of ten thousand such opposers and despisers as you that continue impenitent, in competition with his glory ! Why surely you shall be dashed in pieces as a potter’s vessel, and trodden down as the mire of the streets. God may, through wonderful patience, bear with hardened careless sinners for awhile ; but he will not always bear with such despisers of his dear Son, and his great salvation, the glory of which he has

had so much at heart, but will utterly consume them without remedy, and without mercy.

2. I conclude with a use of encouragement to burdened souls, to put their trust in Christ for salvation. To all such as are not careless and negligent, but sensible in some measure of their need of an interest in Christ, and afraid of the wrath to come; to such, what has been said on this subject holds forth great encouragement, to venture their souls on the Lord Jesus Christ; and as motives proper to excite you so to do, let me lead you to consider two things in particular.

(1) The completeness of the purchase which has been made. As you have heard, this work of purchasing salvation was wholly finished during the time of Christ's humiliation. When Christ rose from the dead, and was exalted from that abasement to which he submitted for our salvation, the purchase of eternal life was completely made, so that there was no need of any thing more to be done in order to it. But now the servants were sent forth with this message: 'Behold I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready, come unto the marriage.' Matt. xxii. 4. Therefore all things being ready, are your sins many and great? Here is enough done by Christ to procure their pardon; there no need of any righteousness of yours to obtain your justification. No, you may come freely, without money and without price. Since therefore there is such a free and gracious invitation given you, come; come naked as you are. Come as a poor condemned criminal; come and cast yourself down at Christ's feet, as one justly condemned, and utterly helpless in yourself. Here is a complete salvation wrought out by Christ, and through him offered to you; come therefore, accept of it, and be saved.

(2) For Christ to reject one who thus comes to him, would be to frustrate all those great things which you have heard that God brought to pass from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ.

It would also frustrate all that Christ did and suffered while on earth; yea, it would frustrate the incarnation of Christ itself, for all these things were for that end, that those might be saved who should come to Christ. Therefore you may be sure that he will not be backward in saving those who come to him, and trust in him; for he has no desire to frustrate himself in his own work. Neither will God the Father refuse you; for he has no desire to frustrate himself in all that he did for so many hundred years, to prepare the way for the salvation of sinners by Christ. Come therefore, hearken to the sweet and earnest call of Christ. 'Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.' Matt. xi. 28—30.

PERIOD III.

FROM THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST TO THE END
OF THE WORLD.

IN discoursing on this subject, we have already shown how the work of redemption was carried on through the two first of the three periods into which we divided the whole space of time, from the fall to the end of the world: and we are now come to the third and last period, beginning with Christ's resurrection, and reaching to the end of the world; and are now to show how this work was also carried on through this period, from the following proposition—

That the space of time from the Resurrection of Christ to the End of the World is all engaged in bringing about the great effect or success of Christ's Purchase.

Not but that there were great effects and glorious success of Christ's purchase of redemption before, even from the beginning. But all that success was only preparatory, and by way of anticipation; as some few fruits are gathered before the harvest. There was no more success before Christ came than God saw needful to prepare the way for his coming. The proper time of the success or effect of Christ's purchase of redemption is after the purchase has been made; as the proper time for the world to enjoy the light of the sun is the day time, after the sun is risen, though we may have some small matter of it reflected from the moon and planets before. And even the success of Christ's redemption, while he himself was on earth, was very small, in comparison of what it was after the conclusion of his humiliation.

But Christ having finished that greatest and most difficult of all works, the work of the purchase of redemption, now is the time for him to obtain the joy that was set before him. Having made his soul an offering for sin, now is the time for him to see his seed, and to have 'a portion divided to him with the great, and to divide the spoil with the strong.' Isai. liii. 1.

One design of Christ's humiliation was, to lay a foundation for the overthrow of Satan's kingdom; and now is come the time to effect it; as Christ a little before his crucifixion said, 'Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out.' John xii. 31. Another design was, to gather together in one all things in Christ. John xii. 32. 'And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me;' which is agreeable to Jacob's prophecy of Christ, that 'when Shiloh should come, to him should the gathering of the people be.' Gen. xlix. 10.—A third design is the salvation of the elect. Now when his sufferings are finished, and his humiliation is perfected, the time is come for that also. Heb. v. 8, 9. 'Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he

suffered ; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.'---Another design was, to accomplish by these things great glory to the persons of the Trinity. Now also is come the time for that, John xvii. 1. ' Father, the hour is come ; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.'---Lastly, another design was the glory of the saints, John xvii. 2. ' As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.'---And all the dispensations of God's providence henceforward, even to the final consummation of all things, are to give Christ his reward, and to fulfil the joy that was set before him.

BEFORE I enter on the consideration of the particular things accomplished in this period, I would briefly observe, how the times of this period are represented in scripture.

1. The times of this period, for the most part, are those which in the Old Testament are called the 'latter days.' We often, in the prophets of the Old Testament, read of such and such things that should come to pass in the 'latter days,' and sometimes in the 'last days.' Now these expressions of the prophets are most commonly to be understood of the times of this period. They are called the latter days, and the last days, because this is the last period of the series of God's providences on earth, the last period of that great work of providence, the work of redemption, which is as it were the sum of God's works of providence, the time wherein the church is under the last dispensation that ever will be given on earth.

2. The whole time of this period is sometimes in scripture called 'the end of the world.' 1 Cor. x. 11. ' Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples ; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.' The apostle in this expression, 'the end of the world,' means the whole of the gospel day, from the

birth of Christ to the finishing of the day of judgment. Heb. ix. 26. 'But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.' This space of time may well be called 'the end of the world,' for this whole time is taken up in bringing things to that great issue which God had been preparing the way for, in all the great dispensations of providence, from the first fall of man to this time. Before, things were in a kind of preparatory state, but now they are in a finishing state: it is the winding up of things which is all this while accomplishing. Heaven and earth began to shake in order to a dissolution, according to the prophecy of Haggai, before Christ came, that so only 'those things that cannot be shaken may remain;' or that those things that are to come to an end, may come to an end, and that only those things may remain, which are to remain eternally. Heb. xii. 27.

So, in the first place, the carnal ordinances of the Jewish worship came to an end, to make way for the establishment of that spiritual worship, the worship of the heart, which is to endure to eternity. John iv. 21, 23. 'Jesus saith unto the woman, Believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him.' This is one instance of the temporary world's coming to an end, and the eternal world's beginning. Another instance that the outward temple, and the city of Jerusalem, came to an end, to give place to the setting up of the spiritual temple and the city, which are to endure for ever, which is also another instance of removing those things which are ready to vanish away, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Again, the old heathen empire comes to an end, to make way for the everlasting empire of Christ. Upon the fall of antichrist, an end will be put to Satan's visible kingdom

on earth, to establish Christ's eternal kingdom. Dan. vii. 27. 'And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.' This is another instance of the ending of the temporary world, and the beginning of the eternal one. And then, lastly, the very frame of this corruptible world shall come to an end, to make way for the church to dwell in another dwellingplace, which shall last to eternity; which is the concluding instance.

Because the world is thus coming to an end by various steps and degrees, the apostle perhaps uses this expression, that not the end, but the 'ends' of the world are come on us; as though the world has several endings one after another. The gospel dispensation is the last state of things in the world; and this state is a finishing state; it is all spent in finishing things off which before had been preparing, or abolishing things which before had stood. It is all spent as it were in summing things up, and bringing them to their issue, and their proper fulfilment. Now all the old types are fulfilled, and the predictions of all the prophets from the beginning of the world shall be accomplished in this period.

3. That state of things which is attained in the events of this period is called 'a new heaven and a new earth.' Isai. lxxv. 17, 18. 'For behold, I create a new heaven and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.' And chap. lxxvi. 22. 'For as the new heavens and new earth which I make, shall remain before me; so shall your seed and your name remain.' See also chap. li. 16. As the former state of things, or the old world, by one step after another, is through this period coming to an end; so the new state of things, or the new world, which is a spi-

ritual world, is beginning and setting up. In consequence of each of these finishings of the old state of things, there is the beginning of a new and eternal one. So that which accompanied the destruction of the literal Jerusalem, was an establishing of the spiritual. So with respect to the destruction of the old heathen empire, and all the other endings of the old state of things, till at length the very outward frame of the old world itself shall come to an end; and the church shall dwell in a world new to it, or to a great part of it, even heaven, which will be a new habitation: and then shall the utmost be accomplished that is meant of the new heavens and the new earth. Rev. xxi. 1.

The end of God's creating the world was to prepare a kingdom for his Son, for he is appointed heir of the world; and that he might have the possession of it, and a kingdom in it, which should remain to all eternity. So far as the kingdom of Christ is set up in the world, so far is the world brought to its end, and the eternal state of things set up. So far are all the great changes and revolutions of the world brought to their ultimate issue. So far are the waters of the long channel of divine providence, which has so many branches, and so many windings and turnings, emptied out into their proper ocean, which they have been seeking from the beginning and head of their course, and so are come to their rest. So far as Christ's kingdom is established in the world, so far are things wound up and settled in their everlasting state, and a period put to the course of things in this changeable world; so far are the first heavens and the first earth come to an end, and the new heavens and the new earth established in their room.---This leads me to observe,

4. That the state of things which is attained by the events of this period, is what is so often called 'the kingdom of heaven,' or the kingdom of God. We very often read in the New Testament of the kingdom of heaven. John the Baptist preached that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, and so did

Christ, and his disciples after him; referring to something that the Jews in those days expected by that name. They seem to have taken their expectation and the name chiefly from that prophecy of Daniel in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, Dan. ii. 44. 'And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom.' Also chap. vii. 13, 14. Now this kingdom of heaven is that evangelical state of things in his church, and in the world, wherein consists the success of Christ's redemption in this period. There had been often great kingdoms set up before: but Christ came to set up the last kingdom, which is not an earthly but a heavenly kingdom, and so is properly called the kingdom of heaven. John xviii. 36. 'My kingdom is not of this world.' Luke xxii. 29. 'My Father hath appointed unto me a kingdom.'---Under this head I would observe several things particularly, for the clearer understanding of what the scriptures say concerning this period.

(1) The setting up of the kingdom of Christ is chiefly accomplished by four successive great events, each of which is in scripture called Christ's 'coming in his kingdom.' The first is Christ's appearing in those wonderful dispensations of providence in the apostles' days, in erecting his kingdom, and destroying his enemies, which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem. This is called Christ's coming in his kingdom, Matt. xiv. 28. 'Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.' The second was accomplished in Constantine's time, in the destruction of the heathen Roman empire. This also is represented as Christ's coming, and is compared to the last judgment. Rev. vi. 13---17. The third is to be accomplished at the destruction of antichrist, which is represented as Christ's coming in his kingdom, in the prophecy of Daniel, and in other places, as I may possibly show hereafter. The fourth and last is his coming to judgment in the end of time, which is the event

principally signified in scripture by Christ's coming in his kingdom.

(2) I would observe, that each of the three former of these is a lively image of the last, viz. Christ's coming to the final judgment; as the principal dispensations of providence before Christ's first coming were types of that event.---As Christ's last coming to judgment is accompanied with a resurrection of the dead, so is each of the three foregoing with a spiritual resurrection. The coming of Christ to the destruction of Jerusalem was preceded by a glorious spiritual resurrection of souls in the calling of the Gentiles, and bringing multitudes to him by the preaching of the gospel. Christ's coming in Constantine's time was accompanied with a spiritual resurrection of the greater part of the known world, in a restoration of it to a visible church state, from a state of heathenism. So Christ's coming at the destruction of antichrist will be attended with a spiritual resurrection of the church after it had been long as it were dead, in the times of antichrist. This is called the first resurrection in the Revelation, chap. xx. 5.

Again, as Christ in the last judgment will manifest himself in the glory of his Father, so in each of the three foregoing events Christ gloriously manifests himself in judgments upon his enemies, and in grace and favour to his church. As the last coming of Christ will be attended with a literal gathering together of the elect from the four winds of heaven, so were each of the preceding attended with a spiritual ingathering. As this gathering together of the elect will be effected by the angels with a great sound of a trumpet, Matt. xxiv. 31, so are each of the preceding by the trumpet of the gospel, sounded by the ministers of Christ: as there shall precede the last appearance of Christ, a time of great degeneracy and wickedness, so this has been, or will be, the case with each of the other appearances. Before each of them is a time of great opposition to the church. Before the first, by the Jews; before

the second, by the heathen; before the third, by antichrist; and before the last, by Gog and Magog, as described in the Revelation.

By each of these comings of Christ, God works a glorious deliverance for his church; each of them is accompanied with a glorious advancement of the state of it.—The first, which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem, was attended with bringing the church into the glorious state of the gospel; the second, in Constantine's time, with an advancement of the church into a state of liberty from persecution, and the countenance of civil authority, and triumph over their heathen persecutors. The third, which shall be at the downfall of antichrist, will be accompanied with an advancement of the church into that state of the glorious prevalence of truth, liberty, peace and joy, that we so often read of in the prophetic parts of scripture. The last will be attended with the advancement of the church to consummate glory in heaven.—Each of these is accompanied with a terrible destruction of the wicked, and the enemies of the church: the first, with the terrible destruction of the persecuting Jews; the second, with dreadful judgments on the heathen; the third, with the awful destruction of antichrist, the most cruel and bitter enemy that ever the church had; the fourth, with divine wrath and vengeance on all the ungodly.—Farther, there is in each of these appearances of Christ an ending of the old heavens and the old earth, and a beginning of new heavens and a new earth; or an end of a temporal state of things, and a beginning of an eternal one.

(3) Each of those four great dispensations which are represented as Christ's coming in his kingdom, are but so many steps and degrees of the accomplishment of one event. They are not the setting up of so many distinct kingdoms of Christ, but only several degrees of the accomplishment of one event. Dan. vii. 13, 14. 'I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days,

and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.' This is what the Jews expected, and called 'the coming of the kingdom of heaven;' and what John the Baptist and Christ had respect to, when they said, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'

(4) As there are several steps in the accomplishment of the kingdom of Christ, so in each one of them the event is accomplished in a farther degree than in the foregoing. That in the time of Constantine was a greater and farther accomplishment of the kingdom of Christ, than that which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem. That which shall be at the fall of antichrist, will be a still farther accomplishment of the same thing, and so on with regard to each; so that the kingdom of Christ is gradually prevailing and growing by these several great steps of its fulfilment, from the time of Christ's resurrection to the end of the world. And because these four great events are but images one of another, and the three former but types of the last, and since they are all only several steps of the accomplishment of the same thing; hence we find them all from time to time prophesied of under one, as they are in the prophecies of Daniel, and likewise in the twenty fourth chapter of Matthew, where some things seem more applicable to one of them, and others to another.

(5) It may be observed, that the providences of God between these four great events are to make way for the kingdom and glory of Christ in the great event following. Those dispensations of providence which were towards the church of God and the world, before the destruction of the heathen empire in the time of Constantine, seem all to have been to make way for the glory of Christ, and the happiness of the church in that event. And so the gracious providences of God since that, till the destruction of

antichrist, and the beginning of the glorious times of the church which follow, seem all to be to prepare the way for the greater glory of Christ and his church in that event ; and the providences of God which shall be after that to the end of the world, seem to be for the greater manifestation of Christ's glory at the end of the world, and in the final consummation of all things.

I thought it needful to observe those things in general concerning this last period of the series of God's providence, before I take notice of the particular providences by which the work of redemption is carried on through this period ; and before I proceed, I will also briefly answer an enquiry, viz. Why the setting up of Christ's kingdom after his humiliation should be so gradual, by so many steps, and so long in accomplishing, since God could easily have finished it at once ? Though it would be presumption in us to pretend to declare all the ends of God in this, yet doubtless much of his wisdom may be seen in it, and particularly in these two things :

[1] In this respect God's wisdom is more visible. If it had been done at once, or in a very short time, there would not have been such opportunities to perceive and observe it, as when the work is gradually accomplished, and one effect of his wisdom is held forth to observation after another. It is wisely determined of God, to accomplish this great design by a wonderful and long series of events, that the glory of his wisdom may be displayed in the whole series ; and that the glory of his perfections may be seen, appearing as it were by parts, and in particular successive manifestations : for if all that glory which appears in all these events had been manifested at once, it would have been too much for us, and more than we at once could take notice of ; it would have dazzled our eyes, and overpowered our sight.

[2] Satan is more gloriously triumphed over. God could easily, by an act of almighty power, at once have crushed Satan. But by giving him time to use his utmost subtilty to hinder the success of what

Christ had done and suffered, he is not defeated merely by surprise, but has large opportunity to use his utmost power and subtilty again and again, to strengthen his own interest all that he can by the work of many ages. Thus God destroys and confounds him, and sets up Christ's kingdom time after time, in spite of all his subtle machinations and great works, and by every step advances it still higher and higher, till at length it is fully set up, and Satan perfectly and eternally vanquished.

I now proceed to take notice of the particular events by which, from the end of Christ's humiliation to the end of the world, the success of Christ's purchase has been or shall be accomplished.

I. Those things whereby Christ was capacitated for this work.

I would take notice, first, of those things by which Christ was put into a capacity for accomplishing the end of his purchase. And they are two things, viz. his resurrection and his ascension. As we observed before, the incarnation of Christ was necessary in order to Christ's being in a capacity for the purchase of redemption, so the resurrection and ascension of Christ were requisite in order to his accomplishing the success of his purchase.

1. His Resurrection. It was necessary in order to Christ's obtaining the end and effect of his purchase of redemption, that he should rise from the dead. God the Father had committed the whole affair of redemption, not only the purchasing of it, but the bestowment of the blessings purchased, to his Son, that he should not only purchase it as priest, but actually accomplish it as king of Zion, and in his complex person as God-man. For the Father would have nothing to do with fallen man in a way of mercy but by a mediator. But in order

that Christ might carry on the work of redemption, and accomplish thus the success of his own purchase, it was necessary that he should be alive, and so that he should rise from the dead. Therefore Christ, after he had finished this purchase by his death, and by continuing for a time under the power of death, rises from the dead, to fulfil the end of his purchase, and himself to bring about that for which he died: for this matter God the Father had committed unto him, that he might, as Lord of all, manage all to his own purposes. 'For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.' Rom. xiv. 9.

Indeed, both Christ's resurrection and his ascension, were part of the success of what he did and suffered in his humiliation. For though Christ did not properly purchase redemption for himself, yet he purchased eternal life and glory for himself, as man and Mediator, and these were given him as a reward of what he did and suffered. Phil. ii. 8, 9. 'He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: wherefore God also hath highly exalted him.' And it may be looked upon as part of the success of Christ's purchase, if it be considered that he did not rise as a private person, but as the head of his elect church, so that they did as it were all rise with him. Christ was justified in his resurrection, or God hereby acquitted and discharged him, as having done and suffered enough for the sins of all the elect. Rom. iv. 25. 'Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.' And God put him in possession of eternal life, as the head of the church, as a sure earnest that they should follow; for when Christ rose from the dead, it was the beginning of eternal life in him. His life before his death was a mortal life, a temporal life; but his life after his resurrection was an eternal life. Rom. vi. 9. 'Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.'

Rev. i. 18. 'I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen.'---But he was put in possession of this eternal life, as the head of the body; and took possession of it, not only to enjoy it himself, but to bestow the same on all who believe in him; so that the whole church, as it were, rises in him.

The resurrection of Christ is the most joyful event that ever came to pass; because hereby Christ rested from the great and difficult work of purchasing redemption, and received God's testimony, that it was finished.* The death of Christ was full of pain and sorrow; by his resurrection that sorrow is turned into joy. The head of the church, in that great event, enters on the possession of eternal life, and the whole church is as it were 'begotten again to a lively hope.' 1 Pet. i. 3. Weeping had continued for a night, but now joy cometh in the morning, the most joyful morning that ever was. This is the day of the reigning of the head of the church, and all the church reigns with him. This is spoken of as a day which was worthy to be commemorated with the greatest joy of all days. Psal. cxviii. 24. 'This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it.' Therefore this is appointed for the day of the church's spiritual rejoicing to the

* 'Was ever joy more rational? Was ever triumph more glorious? The triumphant entries of conquerors, the songs that rend the air in praise of their victories, the pyramids on which their exploits are transmitted to posterity, when they have subdued an enemy, routed an army, humbled the pride, and repressed the rage of a foe; ought not all these to yield to the joys that are occasioned by the event which we celebrate to-day? Ought not all these to yield to the victories of our incomparable Lord, and to his people's expression of praise? One part of the gratitude which is due to beneficial events, is to know their value, and to be affected with the benefits they procure. Let us celebrate the praise of the author of our redemption, my brethren; let us call heaven and earth to witness our gratitude. Let an increase of zeal accompany this part of our engagements. Let a double portion of fire from heaven kindle our sacrifices, and with a heart penetrated with the liveliest gratitude and with the most ardent love, let each christian exclaim, 'Blessed be the God and Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten me again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.' [SAURIN'S Sermons, Vol. ii. Ser. 8.]

end of the world, to be weekly sanctified, as their day of holy rest and joy, that the church therein may rest and rejoice with her head. And as the third chapter of Genesis is the most sorrowful chapter in the Bible ; so those chapters in the evangelists that give an account of the resurrection of Christ, may be looked upon as the most joyful ; for they give an account of the finishing of the purchase of redemption, and the beginning of the glory of the head of the church, as a seal and earnest of the eternal glory of all the members.

It is farther to be observed, that the day of the gospel most properly begins with the resurrection of Christ. Till Christ arose from the dead, the Old Testament dispensation remained : but now it ceases, all being fulfilled that was shadowed forth in the typical ordinances of that dispensation. Here most properly is the end of the Old Testament night, and Christ rising from the grave with joy and glory, as the joyful bridegroom of the church, as a glorious conqueror to subdue their enemies under their feet, was like the sun rising as it were from under the earth, after a long night of darkness, and coming forth as a bridegroom, prepared as a strong man to run his race, appearing in joyful light to enlighten the world. Psal. xix. Now that glorious dispensation begins which the prophets so long foretold, now the gospel sun is risen in glory, ' and with healing in his wings, that those who fear God's name may go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.' Mal. iv. 2.

2. Christ's Ascension into heaven. In this I would include his sitting at the right hand of God, for Christ's ascension, and sitting at the right hand of God, can scarcely be looked upon as two distinct things. His ascension was nothing else but ascending to God's right hand ; it was his coming to sit down at his Father's right hand in glory. This was another thing whereby Christ was put into a capacity for accomplishing the effect of his purchase : as one that comes to deliver a people as their king, in order to it, and that he might be under the best

capacity for it, is first enthroned. We are told that Christ was exalted for this end, that he might accomplish the success of his redemption. 'Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to give repentance unto Israel, and the remission of sins.' Acts v. 31.

Christ's ascension into heaven was as it were his solemn coronation, whereby the Father seated him upon the throne, and invested him with the glory of his kingdom which he had purchased for himself, that he might thereby obtain the success of his redemption in conquering all his enemies. Psal. cx. 1. 'Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.' Christ entered into heaven, in order to obtain the success of his purchase, as the high priest of old, after he had offered sacrifice, entered into the holy of holies with the blood of the sacrifice, in order to obtain the success of the sacrifice which he had offered. Heb. ix. 12. He entered into heaven, there to make intercession for his people, to plead the sacrifice which he had made in order to its success. Heb. vii. 25. And as he ascended into heaven, God the Father did in a visible manner set him on the throne as king of the universe. He then put the angels all under him, and subjected heaven and earth under him, that he might govern them for the good of the people for whom he had died. Ephes. i. 20---22. And as Christ rose from the dead, so he ascended into heaven as the head of the body and forerunner of all the church; and so they as it were ascend with him, as well as rise with him; so that we are both raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. Ephes. ii. 6.

The day of Christ's ascension into heaven was doubtless a joyful, glorious day in heaven; and as heaven received Christ, God-man, so doubtless it received a great accession of glory and happiness, far beyond what it had before. Hence the times in both parts of the church, both that part which is in heaven, and also that which is on earth, are become more glorious since Christ's humiliation than before.

So much for those things whereby Christ was put into the best capacity for obtaining the success of redemption.

II. The Dispensations of Providence by which this success was established.

I would consider those dispensations of Providence, by which the means of this success were established after Christ's resurrection. And these were,

1. The abolishing of the Jewish dispensation. This indeed was gradually done, but it began from the time of Christ's resurrection, in which the abolition of it is founded. This was the first thing done towards bringing the former state of the world to an end. This is to be looked upon as the great means of the success of Christ's redemption. For the Jewish dispensation was not fitted for more than that one nation; nor would it have been in any wise practicable by them in all parts of the world to go to Jerusalem three times a year, as was prescribed in that constitution. When therefore God had a design of enlarging his church, as he did after Christ's resurrection, it was necessary that this dispensation should be abolished. If it had been continued, it would have been a great hindrance to the enlargement of the church. And besides, their ceremonial law, by reason of its burdensomeness, and the great peculiarity of some of its rites, was as it were a wall of partition, and the ground of enmity between Jews and Gentiles, and would have kept the Gentiles from complying with the true religion. This wall therefore was broken down, to make way for the more extensive success of the gospel. Ephes. ii. 14, 15.

2. The next thing in order of time seems to be the appointment of the Christian sabbath. For though this was gradually established in the christian church, yet those things by which the revelation of God's mind and will was made, began on the

day of Christ's resurrection, on his appearing then to his disciples. John xx. 19. It was afterwards confirmed by his appearing from time to time on that day rather than any other, John xx. 26, and by his sending down the Holy Spirit so remarkably on that day. Acts ii. 1. Afterwards in directing that public assemblies and the public worship of christians should be on that day, which may be concluded from Acts xx. 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. and Rev. i. 10. Thus the day of the week on which Christ rose from the dead, that joyful day, is appointed to be the day of the church's holy rejoicing to the end of the world, and the day of their stated public worship.* And this is a very great and principal means of the success which the gospel has had in the world.

3. The next thing was Christ's appointment of the gospel ministry, and commissioning and sending forth his apostles to teach and baptize all nations. Matt xxviii. 19, 20. 'Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.'—There were three things done by this one instruction and commission of Christ to his apostles, viz.

(1) The appointment of the office of the gospel ministry. For this commission which Christ gives to his apostles, in the most essential parts of it, belongs to all ministers; and the apostles, by virtue of it, were ministers or elders of the universal church.

* If the day on which he rose from the dead, be the day which is called 'the Lord's;' if on the first day of the week the primitive christians, even in the apostolic times, did assemble for religious purposes; did hear the word, did celebrate the supper, did lay by them in store as God had prospered them; shall we not conclude, that it is the will of God that now the seventh day shall give place to the first? It is also hereby intimated that christians are not first to work, and then to rest, as under the ancient covenant of works, but that, in the order of the new covenant, their privilege precedes their duty, and labour follows after rest.

(2) Here is something peculiar in this commission of the apostles, viz. to go forth from one nation to another, preaching the gospel in all the world. The apostles had something above what belonged to their ordinary character as ministers; they had an extraordinary power in teaching and ruling, which extended to all the churches to the end of the world. Thus the apostles were, in subordination to Christ, made foundations of the christian church. Ephes. ii. 20. Rev. xxi. 14.

(3) Here is an appointment of christian baptism. This ordinance indeed had a beginning before: John the Baptist and Christ both baptized. But now especially by this institution it is established as an ordinance to be upheld in the christian church to the end of the world.—The ordinance of the Lord's supper was established just before Christ's crucifixion.

4. The next thing to be observed is the enduing of the apostles, and others, with the extraordinary and miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost; such as the gift of tongues, the gift of healing, of prophecy, &c. The Spirit of God was poured out in great abundance in this respect: so that not only ministers, but a great number of christians throughout the world, were endued with them, both old and young; not only officers, and more honourable persons, but the meaner sort of people, servants and handmaids, agreeable to Joel's prophecy. Chap. ii. 28, 29. Of this the apostle Peter takes notice, that it is accomplished in this dispensation. Acts ii. 11.

How wonderful a dispensation was this! Under the Old Testament, but few had such honours put upon them. Moses wished that all the Lord's people were prophets, Numb. xi. 27—29, whereas Joshua thought it much that Eldad and Medad prophesied: but now we find the wish of Moses fulfilled. And this continued in a very considerable degree to the end of the apostolic age, or the first hundred years after the birth of Christ, which is therefore called the age of miracles.

This was a great means of the success of the gospel in that age, and of establishing the christian church in all parts of the world ; and not only in that age, but in all ages to the end of the world :* for christianity being by this means established through so great a part of the known world by miracles, it was after that more easily continued by tradition ; and then, by means of these extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, the apostles, and others, were enabled to write the New Testament, to be an infallible rule of faith and manners to the church to the end of the world. Furthermore, these miracles stand recorded in those writings as a standing proof and evidence of the truth of the christian religion to all ages.

5. The next thing I would observe is the revealing of those glorious doctrines of the gospel more fully and plainly, which had under the Old Testament been obscurely revealed. The doctrine of Christ's satisfaction and righteousness, his ascension and glory, and the way of salvation, under the Old Testament, were in a great measure hid under the veil of types and shadows, and more obscure revelations, as Moses put a veil on his face to hide the shining of it. But now the veil of the temple is rent from the top to the bottom ; and Christ, the antitype of Moses, shines, and the shining of his face is without a veil. 2 Cor. iii. 12, 13, 18. Now these glorious mysteries are plainly revealed, which were in a

* Christianity established by Miracles.] 'Imagine these venerable men addressing their adversaries on the day of the christian pentecost in this language. Ye refuse to believe us on our depositions, five hundred of us ye think are enthusiasts ; or perhaps ye think us impostors, or take us for madmen. But bring out your sick, present your demoniaes, fetch hither your dead. Let all nations send us some of their inhabitants ; we will restore hearing to the deaf, and sight to the blind ; we will make the lame walk, we will cast out devils, and raise the dead. We, we publicans, we illiterate men, we tentmakers, we fishermen, we will discourse with all the people of the world in their own languages. We will explain prophecies, develop the most sublime mysteries, teach you notions of God, precepts for the conduct of life, plans of morality and religion, more extensive, more sublime, and more advantageous, than those of your priests and philosophers, yea, than those of Moses himself. We will do more still ; we will communicate those gifts to you.' [SAURIN'S Sermons, Vol. ii.

great measure kept secret from the foundation of the world. Ephes. iii. 3--5. Rom. xvi. 25. 'According to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but is now made manifest; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations, but now is made manifest to his saints.' Col. i. 26.

Thus the Sun of righteousness, after it is risen from under the earth, begins to shine forth clearly, and not by a dim reflection as it did before. Christ before his death revealed many things more clearly than ever they had been discovered in the Old Testament; but the great mysteries of Christ's redemption, reconciliation by his death, and justification by his righteousness, were not so plainly revealed before Christ's resurrection. Christ gave this reason for it, that he would not put new wine into old bottles; and it was done gradually after his resurrection. In all likelihood, Christ much more clearly instructed them personally after his resurrection, and before his ascension; as we read that he continued with them forty days, speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, Acts i. 3; and that 'he opened their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,' Luke xxiv. 45. But the clear revelation of these things was principally after the pouring out of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, agreeable to Christ's promise. John xvi. 12, 13. 'I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth.' This clear revelation of the mysteries of the gospel as they are delivered, we have chiefly through the hands of the apostle Paul, by whose writings a child may come to know more of the doctrines of the gospel, in many respects, than the greatest prophets knew under the darkness of the Old Testament.--- Thus you see how the light of the gospel, which began to dawn immediately after the fall, and gradually grew and increased through all the ages of

the Old Testament, is now come to the light of perfect day, and the brightness of the sun shining forth in his unvailed glory.

6. The next thing that I would observe is, the appointment of the office of deacons in the christian church, which we have an account of in the seventh chapter of the Acts, to take care for the outward supply of the members of Christ's church; and the exercise of that great christian virtue, charity.*

7. The calling, qualifying, and sending the apostle Paul. This was begun in his conversion as he was going to Damascus, and was one of the greatest means of the success of Christ's redemption that followed: for this success was more by the labours, preaching, and writings of this apostle, than all the others put together. For, as he says, he 'laboured more abundantly than they all;' so also his success was more abundant. 1 Cor. xv. 10. As he was the apostle of the Gentiles, so it was principally by his ministry that the Gentiles were called, and the gospel spread throughout the world. The nations of Europe have the gospel among them chiefly through his means, and he was more employed by the Holy Ghost in revealing its glorious doctrines in his writings, for the use of the church in all ages, than all the other apostles.

8. The next thing I would observe is, the institution of ecclesiastical Councils, for deciding controver-

* It is generally allowed by inquirers into these subjects, that in the primitive church there were also Deaconesses, or pious women, whose particular business it was to assist in the entertainment and care of the itinerant preachers; visit the sick and imprisoned, instruct female catechumens, and assist at their baptism; then more particularly necessary from the peculiar customs of those countries, the persecuted state of the church, and the speedier spreading of the gospel.—Such a one it is reasonable to think Phebe was, mentioned in Rom xvi. 1, and who is expressly called a deaconess, or stated servant, as Dr. Doddridge renders it. They were usually widows, and to prevent scandal, generally in years. 1 Tim. v. 9. But as the primitive christians seem to be led to this practice from the peculiarity of their circumstances, and the scripture is entirely silent as to any appointment to this supposed office, or any rules about it, it is very justly laid aside, at least as an office.

sies, and ordering the affairs of the church of Christ, of which we have an account in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts.*

9. The last thing I shall mention under this head is, the committing the New Testament to writing. This was all written after the resurrection of Christ; and all written, either by the apostles, or by the evangelists Mark and Luke, who were companions of the apostles. The gospel of Mark is supposed to be written by that Mark whose mother was Mary, in whose house they were praying for Peter, when he, (brought out of prison by the angel,) came and knocked at the door. Acts xii. 12. 'And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of the mother of John, whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying.' He was the companion of the apostles Barnabas and Saul. Acts xv. 37. 'And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark.' He was Barnabas's sister's son, and seems sometime to have been a companion of the apostle Paul. Col. iv. 10. 'Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas; touching whom ye received commandment: if he come unto you, receive him.' The apostles seem to have made great account of him, as appears by those places, and also by Acts xii. 25. 'And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark.' Also Acts xii. 5. 'When

* Who can help admiring the primitive institution of councils, and at the same time deploring the abuse of them in after ages? While they were assemblies of excellent and apostolic men, who met to consult and advise with one another on the common interests of christianity, we venerate and esteem them; but when they degenerated to be tools of state, and were composed of men heated by a spirit of party, and warped by secular interests, who showed their piety only in aspiring to seats of temporal power, and their zeal in excommunicating and persecuting each other;—then they became objects only of pity and contempt. Yet, such is the course of human affairs, as they sunk in value, they rose in authority; and when they grew carnal and vicious, were judged infallible and divine! It was a departing from the scriptures, as the only rule of faith and practice, and setting up an exorbitant power in the church, and the pastors of it, that led on the great apostasy, and helped up antichrist to his throne.

they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; and they had also John to their minister.' Again 2 Tim. iv. 11. 'Only Luke is with me. Take Mark and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry.'

Luke, who wrote the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts, was a companion of the apostle Paul. He is spoken of as being with him in the last-mentioned place, and speaks of himself as accompanying him in his travels, in the history of the Acts; and therefore he speaks in the first person plural, 'We' went to such and such a place. He was greatly beloved by the apostle Paul: he is that beloved physician spoken of, Col. iv. 14. The apostle ranks Mark and Luke among his fellow labourers. Philemon 24 'Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow labourers.'

The rest of the books were all written by the apostles themselves. The books of the New Testament are either historical, doctrinal, or prophetic. The historical books are the writings of the four evangelists, giving us the history of Christ, and his purchase of redemption, with his resurrection and ascension: and the Acts of the Apostles, giving an account of the great things by which the christian church was first established and propagated. The doctrinal books are the epistles. These, most of them, we have from the great apostle Paul. And we have one prophetic book, which takes place after the end of the history of the whole bible, and gives an account of the great events by which the work of redemption was to be carried on till the end of the world.

All these books are supposed to have been written before the destruction of Jerusalem, excepting those of John, who lived the longest of all the apostles, and wrote, as is supposed, after the destruction of Jerusalem. To this beloved disciple it was that Christ revealed those wonderful things which were to come to pass in his church to the end of time;

and he put the finishing hand to the canon of scripture, and sealed up the whole. So that now that great and standing written rule, which was begun about Moses's time, was completed and settled, and a curse denounced against him that adds any thing to it, or diminishes any thing from it. All the stated means of grace were finished in the apostolic age, and are to remain unaltered to the day of judgment.*---Thus far we have considered those things by which the means of grace were given and established in the christian church.

III. The success of Christ's redemption during the suffering state of the church.

* The following is a view of the order in which the New Testament was written, with the authors and dates of each book.

THE GOSPELS—according to Dr. OWEN.			
Matthew's	at Jerusalem	about A. D.	38.
Luke's - -	at Corinth - -	- - - -	53.
Mark's - -	at Rome - -	- - - -	63.
John's - -	at Ephesus - -	- - - -	69.
THE ACTS.			
By Luke - -	at Rome or Alexandria - -	- -	63.
PAUL'S EPISTLES—according to Dr. LARDNER.			
1 Thessalonians	at Corinth - -	- - - -	52.
2 Thessalonians	Ditto - -	- - - -	52.
Galatians - -	at Corinth - -	- - - -	52.
1 Corinthians - -	at Ephesus - -	- - - -	56.
1 Timothy - -	at Macedonia - -	- - - -	56.
Titus - -	Ditto - -	- - - -	56.
2 Corinthians	Ditto - -	- - - -	57.
Romans - -	at Corinth - -	- - - -	58.
Ephesians - -	at Rome - -	- - - -	61.
2 Timothy - -	Ditto - -	- - - -	61.
Philippians - -	Ditto - -	- - - -	62.
Colossians - -	Ditto - -	- - - -	62.
Philemon - -	Ditto - -	- - - -	62.
Hebrews - -	at Rome or in Italy - -	- -	63.
GENERAL EPISTLES—according to LARDNER.			
James - -	at Judea - -	- - - -	61 or 62.
1 Peter - -	at Rome - -	- - - -	64.
2 Peter - -	Ditto - -	- - - -	64.
Jude - -	Unknown - -	- - - -	64 or 65.
1, 2, 3 John - -	at Ephesus - -	between 80 & 90.	
REVELATION.			
By John - -	at Patmos or Ephesus - -	- -	95 or 95.

We now come to consider the success of Christ's redemption during the church's suffering persecuted state, from the resurrection of Christ to the fall of antichrist. This space of time, for the most part, is a state of the church's sufferings, and is so represented in scripture. Indeed God is pleased, out of love and pity to his elect, to grant many intermissions during this time, whereby the days of tribulation are as it were shortened. But from Christ's resurrection till the fall of antichrist is the appointed day of Zion's troubles. For the first three hundred years after Christ, the church was for the most part in a state of great affliction, the object of reproach and persecution; first by the Jews, and then by the heathen. After this, from the beginning of Constantine's time, the church had rest and prosperity for a short season; which is represented by the angel's holding the four winds for a little while. Rev. vii. 1. But presently after, the church again suffered persecution from the Arians; then antichrist rose, and the church was driven away into the wilderness, and was kept down in obscurity, contempt and suffering, for a long time, before the reformation by Luther and others. Since the reformation, the church's persecutions have been in some respects beyond all that ever were before. And though some parts of God's church have had rest, yet to this day it is very much kept under by its enemies, and so we may expect it will continue till the fall of antichrist. Then will come the appointed day of the church's prosperity on earth, the set time in which God will favour Zion, the time when the saints shall not be kept under by wicked men as hitherto; but they shall be uppermost, and shall reign on earth, for 'the kingdom shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High.' Dan. vii. 27.

This suffering state is in scripture represented as a time of the church's travail, to bring forth that glory and prosperity of the church which shall be after the fall of antichrist. Rev. xii. 1, 2. This is a

long time, though it be spoken of as being but for a little season, in comparison of the eternal prosperity of the church. Hence the church, under the long continuance of this affliction, cries out, 'How long, oh Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?' Rev. vi. 10. And we are told, that 'white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also, and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.' So Daniel also asks, 'How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?'

It is to be observed, that during this time the main instrument of the church's sufferings has been the Roman government. Rome is therefore in the New Testament, Rev. xvii. 5, called Babylon, because, as of old the troubles of Jerusalem were chiefly from that adverse city, so the troubles of the christian church, the spiritual Jerusalem, are principally from Rome. Before the time of Constantine, the troubles of the christian church were from heathen Rome; since that time, from anti-christian Rome. And as of old, the captivity of the Jews ceased on the destruction of Babylon, so the time of the trouble of the christian church will cease with the destruction of the church of Rome, that spiritual Babylon.

In considering the success of Christ's redemption during this time of the church's tribulation, I would show,---(1) How it was carried on till the destruction of Jerusalem---(2) From thence to the destruction of the heathen empire in the time of Constantine---and (3) From that time to the destruction of anti-christ, with which the days of the church's tribulation and travail end.

1. I would show how the success of Christ's redemption was carried on from his resurrection to the destruction of Jerusalem. In speaking of this, I shall take notice of the success itself---the opposi-

tion made against its enemies—and the terrible judgments of God on those enemies.

(1) Observe the success itself. Soon after Christ had finished the purchase of redemption, and had entered into the holy of holies above with his own blood, there began a glorious success of what he had done and suffered. Having undermined the foundation of Satan's kingdom, it began to fall apace. Swiftly did it hasten to ruin; and Satan might now well be said to fall like lightning from heaven. Satan before had exalted his throne very high, even to the stars of heaven, reigning with great glory in his heathen Roman empire; but never before had he such a downfall as he had soon after Christ's ascension. We may suppose him to have been very lately triumphing in having brought about the death of Christ, as the greatest victory that ever he had; and possibly imagined he had gained God's design by him. But he was quickly made sensible, that he had only been ruining his own kingdom, when he saw it falling so fast soon after. For Christ having ascended and received the Holy Spirit, poured it forth abundantly for the conversion of thousands and millions of souls.

Never had Christ's kingdom been so advanced in the world before. There probably were more souls converted in the age of the apostles than had been from the beginning of the world. Thus God so soon began gloriously to accomplish his promise to his Son, that he should 'see his seed, and that the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand, if he would make his soul an offering for sin.' Isai liii. 10.

[1] Here is to be observed the success which the gospel had among the Jews; for God first began with them. He being about to reject the main body of that people, first calls in his elect from among them. It was so in former great and dreadful judgments of God on that nation; the bulk of them were destroyed, and only a remnant saved or reformed. In the rejection of the ten tribes, the

bulk of them were cast off, when they left the true worship of God in Jeroboam's time, and afterwards more fully in Ahab's; but yet God had reserved a remnant. Many left their possessions in these tribes, and went and settled in those of Judah and Benjamin. And afterwards there were seven thousand in Ahab's time, who had not bowed the knee to Baal. In the captivity into Babylon, only a remnant of them ever returned to their own land. So now far the greater part of the people were rejected entirely, but some few were saved. Therefore the Holy Ghost compares this reservation of a number that were converted by the preaching of the apostles, to those former remnants. Rom. xi. 27. 'Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.' Isai. x. 22.

The glorious success of the gospel among the Jews after Christ's ascension, began by the pouring out of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. So wonderful was this pouring out of the Spirit, and so remarkable and swift the effect of it, that we read of three thousand who were converted to the christian faith in one day, and probably the greater part of them were savingly converted. Acts ii. 41. The Lord also added to the church such as should be saved. Soon after this we are told, that the number of them was about five thousand. Not only was there a multitude converted, but the church was then eminent in piety, as appears by Acts ii. 46, 47. iv. 32.

Thus the christian church was first formed of the nation of Israel; and therefore, when the Gentiles were called, they were only as it were 'added' to Israel, to the seed of Abraham. They were added to the christian church of Israel, as the proselytes of old were to the Mosaic church; and so were grafted on the stock of Abraham, and not a distinct tree. They are still the seed of Abraham and of Israel, as Ruth the Moabitess, and Uriah the Hittite, and

other proselytes of old, were the same people, and ranked as the seed of Israel.

The christian church at first began at Jerusalem, and from thence was propagated to all nations; so that this church at Jerusalem was as it were the mother of all other churches in the world, agreeable to the prophecy, Isai. ii. 3, 4. 'Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem; and he shall judge among the nations, and rebuke many people.' So that the whole church is still spiritually God's Jerusalem.

After this, we read of many thousands of Jews that believed, in Jerusalem, Acts xxi. 20, in other cities of Judea, and in different parts of the world. For wherever the apostles went, if they found any Jews, their manner was, first to go into the synagogues and preach the gospel to them, and many in one place and another believed; as in Damascus, Antioch, &c.

In this outpouring of the Spirit began that first great dispensation, which is called Christ's coming in his kingdom. Christ's coming thus in a spiritual manner for the glorious erection of his kingdom in the world, is represented as his coming down from heaven, whither he had ascended. John xiv. 18. 'I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you,' speaking of his coming by the Comforter, the Spirit of truth. And ver. 28: 'Ye have heard how I say unto you, I go away, and come again unto you.' Thus the apostles began to see the kingdom of heaven come with power, as he had promised. Mark ix. 1.

[2] After the success of the gospel had been so gloriously begun among the Jews, the Spirit of God was next wonderfully poured out on the Samaritans, who were not Jews by nation, but the posterity of those whom the king of Assyria removed from different parts of his dominions, and settled in the land that was inhabited by the ten tribes, whom he carried captive. Yet they had received the five books

of Moses, and practised most of the rites of the law, and so were a sort of mongrel Jews. We do not find them reckoned as Gentiles in the New Testament : for the calling of the Gentiles is spoken of as a new thing after this, beginning with the conversion of Cornelius. But it was an instance of making that a people which were no people : for they had corrupted the religion which Moses commanded, and did not go up to Jerusalem to worship, but had another temple of their own in Mount Gerizzim. This is the mountain of which the woman of Samaria speaks, when she says, ‘ Our fathers worshipped in this mountain.’ John iv. 20. Christ there does not approve of their separation from the Jews, but tells the woman of Samaria that they worshipped they knew not what, and that salvation is of the Jews. But now salvation is brought from the Jews to them by the preaching of Philip, (excepting that before, Christ had some success among them,) with whose preaching there was a glorious effusion of the Spirit of God in the city of Samaria ; where we are told, that ‘ the people believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of Christ, and were baptized, both men and women ; and that there was great joy in that city.’ Acts viii. 8---12.

Thus Christ had a glorious harvest in Samaria ; which is what he seems to have respect to, in what he said to his disciples at Jacob’s well three or four years before, on occasion of the people of Samaria’s appearing at a distance in the fields coming to the place where he was, at the instigation of the woman of Samaria. On that occasion he bids his disciples lift up their eyes to the fields, for that they were white to the harvest. John iv. 35, 36. The disposition which the people of Samaria showed towards Christ and his gospel, evinced that they were ripe for the harvest ; and now the harvest is come by Philip’s preaching. There used to be a most bitter enmity between the Jews and Samaritans ; but now, by their conversion, the Christian, Jews and Samaritans, are all happily united ; for in

Christ Jesus is neither Jew, nor Samaritan, but Christ is all in all. This was a glorious instance of the wolf's dwelling with the Lamb, and the leopard's lying down with the kid. Isai. xi. 6.

[3] The next thing to be observed is the calling of the Gentiles. This was a great and glorious dispensation much spoken of in the Old Testament, and by the apostles time after time, as a most glorious event of Christ's redemption. This was begun in the conversion of Cornelius and his family, greatly to the admiration of Peter, and of those who were with him or were informed of it. Acts x. xi. The next instance that we have any account of, was in the conversion of great numbers of Gentiles in Cyprus, and Cyrene, and Antioch, by the disciples that were scattered abroad through the persecution which arose about Stephen; and presently upon this the disciples began to be called Christians first at Antioch. Acts xi. 19---26.

After this, vast multitudes of Gentiles were converted in many different parts of the world, chiefly by the ministry of the Apostle Paul, the Spirit wonderfully accompanying his preaching in one place and another. Multitudes flocked into the church of Christ, in a great number of cities where the apostle came. So the number of the members of the christian church that were Gentiles soon far exceeded the number of its Jewish members; inso-much that in less than ten years time after Paul was sent forth from Antioch to preach to the Gentiles, it was said of him and his companions, that they had turned the world upside down. Acts xvii. 16. 'These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.' But the most remarkable outpouring of the Spirit in a particular city that we have an account of in the New Testament, seems to be that in the great city of Ephesus. Acts xix. There was also a very extraordinary in-gathering of souls at Corinth, one of the greatest cities of Greece. After this many were converted in Rome, then the chief city of the known world, and the gospel was

propagated into all parts of the Roman empire. Thus the gospel sun, which had lately risen on the Jews, now rose upon and began to enlighten the heathen world, after they had continued in gross darkness for so many ages.

This was a great thing, and such as never had been before. All nations but the Jews, and a few who had at one time and another joined with them, had been rejected from about Moses's time. The Gentile world had been covered over with the thick darkness of idolatry: but now, at the joyful sound of the gospel, they began in all parts to forsake their old idols, to abhor and cast them to the moles and to the bats, and to learn to worship the true God, and trust in his Son Jesus Christ; and God owned for his people those who had so long been afar off, and made them nigh by the blood of Christ. Men were changed from being heathenish and brutish, to be the children of God; were called out of Satan's kingdom of darkness, and brought into God's marvellous light. In almost all countries throughout the known world there were assemblies of the people of God; joyful praises were sung to the true God, and Jesus Christ the Redeemer. Now that great building which God began soon after the fall of man, rises gloriously, not as it had done in former ages, but in quite a new manner; now Daniel's prophecies concerning the last kingdom, which should succeed the four heathenish monarchies, begin to be fulfilled; now the stone cut out of the mountains without hands, began to smite the image on its feet, to break it in pieces, to grow great, and to make great advances towards filling the earth; and now God gathers together the elect from the four winds of heaven, by the preaching of the apostles and other ministers, the angels of the christian church sent forth with the great sound of the gospel trumpet, before the destruction of Jerusalem, agreeably to what Christ had foretold. Matt. xxiv. 31.—This was the success of Christ's purchase,

during the first period of the christian church, which terminated in the destruction of Jerusalem.

(2) I would proceed now to take notice of the opposition which was made to this success by the enemies of it. Satan, who lately was so ready to triumph and exult, as though he had gained the victory in putting Christ to death, now finding himself falling into the pit which he had digged, and seeing Christ's kingdom made such amazing progress, as never had been before, we may conclude he was filled with the greatest confusion and astonishment, and hell seemed to be effectually alarmed by it to make the most violent opposition. And, first, the devil stirred up the Jews, who had before crucified Christ, to persecute the church: for it is observable, that the persecution which the church suffered during this period, was mostly from the Jews. Thus we read in the Acts, when, at Jerusalem, the Holy Ghost was poured out at Pentecost, how the Jews mocked, and said, 'These men are full of new wine;' and the Scribes and Pharisees, with the captain of the temple, were alarmed, and bestirred themselves to oppose and persecute the apostles. They first apprehended and threatened them, and afterwards imprisoned and beat them; breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, they stoned Stephen in a tumultuous rage; and were not content to persecute those that they could find in Judea, but sent abroad to Damascus and other places, to persecute all that they could find every where. Herod, who was chief among them, stretched forth his hand to vex the church, killed James with the sword, and proceeded to take Peter also, and cast him into prison. Acts xii. 1---3.

So in other countries, almost wherever the apostles came, the Jews opposed the gospel in a most malignant manner, contradicting and blaspheming. How many things did the blessed apostle Paul suffer at their hands in one place or another. How violent and blood-thirsty did they show themselves

towards him, when he came to bring mercy to his nation. In this persecution and cruelty was fulfilled that prophecy of Christ : ' Behold, I send you prophets, and wise men, and scribes ; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city.' Matt. xxiii. 34.

(3) I proceed to notice the judgments which were executed on those enemies of Christ, the persecuting Jews.

[1] The bulk of the people were given up to judicial blindness of mind and hardness of heart. Christ denounced such a woe upon them in the days of his flesh. Matt. xiii. 14, 15. The apostle Paul repeated it, Acts xxviii. 25---27 ; and under this curse, this judicial blindness and hardness, they remain to this very day, having been subject to it nearly eighteen hundred years, being the most awful instance of such a judgment, and monuments of God's terrible vengeance, of any people that ever were. That they should continue from generation to generation so obstinately to reject Christ, so that it is a very rare thing that any one of them is converted to the christian faith, though their own scriptures of the Old Testament, which they acknowledge, are so full of plain testimonies against them, is a remarkable evidence of their being dreadfully left of God.

[2] They were rejected and cast off from being any longer God's visible people. They were broken off from the stock of Abraham, and since that have no more been reputed his seed, than the Ishmaelites or Edomites, who are as much his natural seed as they are. The greater part of the two tribes were now cast off, as the ten tribes had been before, and another people were taken in their room, agreeable to the predictions of their own prophets. Thus Moses : ' They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God ; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities, and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people. I will provoke

them to anger with a foolish nation. Deut. xxxii. 21. So Isaiah : ' I am sought of them that asked not for me ; I am found of them that sought me not.' Chap. lxxv. 1. They were visibly rejected and cast off, by God's directing his apostles to turn away from them, and let them alone. Acts xiii. 46, 47. ' Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you : but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles ; for so hath the Lord commanded us.' See also Acts xviii. 6. and xxviii. 28.

Thus far we have had the scripture history to guide us ; henceforward we shall have the guidance only of two things, scripture prophecy, and human history.

[3] The last judgment of God on those enemies of the success of the gospel which I shall mention, is the terrible destruction of their city and country by the Romans. They had great warning, and many means were used with them before this destruction. First, John the Baptist warned them, and told them, that the axe was laid at the root of the tree ; and that every tree which did not bring forth good fruit, should be hewn down and cast into the fire. Matt. iii. 10. Then Christ warned them very particularly, and told them of their approaching destruction, and at the thoughts of it wept over them. After Christ's ascension the apostles abundantly warned them. But they obstinately went on in their opposition to Christ and his church, and in their bitter persecuting practices. Their malignant persecution of the apostle Paul, of which we have an account towards the end of the Acts of the apostles, is supposed to have been not more than seven or eight years before their destruction.

After this God was pleased to give them another remarkable warning by the apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, which was written, as is supposed, about four years before their destruction.

Here the plainest and clearest arguments are set before them from their own law, and from their prophets, for whom they professed such a regard, to prove that Christ Jesus must be the Son of God, and that all their law pointed to him and typified him, and that their Jewish dispensation must needs have ceased. For though the epistle was more immediately directed to the Christian Hebrews, yet the matter of the epistle plainly shows that the apostle intended it for the use and conviction of the unbelieving Jews. And in this epistle he mentions particularly the approaching destruction and fiery indignation which should devour the adversaries. Chap. x. 25—27.

But the generality of them refusing to receive conviction, God soon destroyed them under such terrible circumstances, as the destruction of no country or city since the foundation of the world can parallel; agreeably to what Christ foretold, Matt. xxiv. 21. 'For then shall be tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.' The destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians was very terrible, as it is in a most affecting manner described by the prophet Jeremiah, in his Lamentations; but this was nothing to the dreadful misery and wrath which they suffered in this destruction. Accordingly as Christ foretold, God brought on them all the righteous blood that had been shed from the foundation of the world. Thus the enemies of Christ are made his footstool after his ascension, agreeable to God's promise, Psal. cx. 1, and Christ rules them with a rod of iron. They had been kicking against Christ, but they did but kick against the pricks. The briars and thorns set themselves against him in battle; but he went through them, he burnt them up together. Isai. xxvii. 4.

The destruction of Jerusalem was in all respects agreeably to what Christ had foretold, by the account which Josephus gives of it, who was then

present, and was one of the Jews who had a share in the calamity, and wrote the history of their destruction.* Many circumstances of this destruction resembled the destruction of the wicked at the day of judgment, according to his account, being accompanied with many fearful sights in the heavens, and with a separation of the righteous from the wicked. Their city and temple were burnt, and rased to the

* A comparison of our Lord's predictions with the narrative of the Jewish historian, Josephus, forms the most striking correspondence of prophecy and history that was perhaps ever exhibited, as is shown at large by Bishop Newton on the Prophecies, Vol. ii.

1. Many false Christ's were to precede this event.—Such were Simon Magus, Acts viii. 9, 10. Theudas, Judas of Galilee, Acts v. 36, 37. The Egyptian impostor, Acts xxi. 38, and many others mentioned by Josephus.

2. Wars, famines, pestilence, and earthquakes.—Josephus is full of the 'wars' and rumours of wars in the reigns of Caligula, Claudius, and Nero, during which numbers were destroyed.—'Famines,' particularly one in the days of Claudius, mentioned by Luke, Acts xi. 28, by Josephus, and Suetonius. 'Earthquakes in divers places,' as in Crete, Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, Samos, Laodicea, Hierapolis, Colosse, Campania, and Rome, mentioned by Philostratus, Tacitus, Suetonius, and Josephus.

3. 'Fearful sights and great signs.'—Josephus mentions a star in shape like a sword, hanging over Jerusalem for a long time together—armies fighting in the clouds, a miraculous light in the night for half an hour; a cow which brought forth a lamb, the massy brazen gate of the temple opening of itself, a voice in the temple, 'Arise, let us go hence;' and what he reckons worse than all, the extraordinary conduct of one Jesus, an apparent lunatic, who for more than seven years went about the city proclaiming 'woe to Jerusalem—woe to the city, and to the people, and to the temple,' and could by no means be restrained.

4. 'When ye see the abomination of desolation,' that is, 'Jerusalem compassed with armies, flee into the mountains.' So when Cestius Gallus with his army, after his retreat, and especially when Vespasian brought his forces against Jerusalem,—numbers of Jews fled into the mountainous country, and the Christians in particular to Pella, on the other side Jordan; so that it does not appear that one christian perished in the destruction of Jerusalem.

5. 'Not one stone to be left upon another.'—This was fulfilled by the soldiers of Titus burning the temple, and then digging, and afterwards Terentius Rufus ploughing up its foundation.

6. 'Then shall be great tribulation, such as had not been from the beginning of the world; they shall be slain, and led captive into all nations.'—So Josephus, 'If the misfortunes of all from the beginning of the world were compared with those of the Jews, they would appear much inferior upon the comparison.' To evince the truth of this remark, we shall subjoin a list of the unhappy Jews that perished in this destruction, in Judea and the neighbouring countries, as collected by Lipsius and others from various parts of Josephus's history.

ground, and the ground on which the city stood was plowed; so that one stone was not left upon another. Matt. xxiv. 2.

The people had ceased for the most part to be an independent government, after the Babylonish captivity; but the sceptre entirely departed from Judea, on the death of Archelaus; and then Judea was made a Roman province. After this they were rejected from being the people of God. But now their city and land are utterly destroyed, and themselves carried away; and so have continued in their dispersions through the world, for more than seventeen hundred years.

Thus there was a final end to the Old Testament world: all was finished with a kind of day of judgment, in which the people of God were saved, and his enemies terribly destroyed.—Thus does he who

At Jerusalem, by Florus's orders	- - - -	3,600
By the inhabitants of Caesarea	- - - -	20,000
At Seythopolis in Syria	- - - -	13,000
At Ascalon	- - - -	2,500
At Ptolemais	- - - -	2,000
At Alexandria	- - - -	50,000
At Damascus	- - - -	10,000
At the taking of Joppa by Cestius Gallus	- - - -	8,400
In the mountain of Asamon	- - - -	2,000
In a fight at Ascalon	- - - -	10,000
In an ambush	- - - -	8,000
At Japha	- - - -	15,000
Upon mount Gerizzim	- - - -	11,600
At Joppa, when taken by Vespasian	- - - -	4,200
Slain at Tarichæa	- - - -	7,700
Slain, or killed themselves, at Gamala	- - - -	9,000
Killed in their flight from Gischala	- - - -	6,000
At the siege of Jotapa	- - - -	40,000
Of the Gadarenes, besides numbers drowned	- - - -	15,000
In the villages of Idumea	- - - -	10,000
At Gerasa	- - - -	1,000
At Machærus	- - - -	1,700
Slew themselves at Masada	- - - -	960
In the desert of Jarden	- - - -	3,000
In Cyrene, by the Governor Catulus	- - - -	3,000
At Jerusalem, during the siege	- - - -	1,100,000
		<hr/>
	Total	1,357,660
		<hr/>

Add to these 97,000 prisoners doomed to slavery, besides 11,000 starved to death through neglect or otherwise, and an innumerable multitude which perished in woods, caves, deserts, &c. of whom no computation could be made.

was so lately mocked, despised, and spit upon by these Jews, and whose followers they so malignantly persecuted, appear gloriously exalted over his enemies.

HAVING thus shown how the success of Christ's purchase was carried on till the destruction of Jerusalem, I come now,

2. To show how it was carried on from that time till the destruction of the heathen empire in the time of Constantine the Great, which is the second great event compared to Christ's coming to judgment.

Jerusalem was destroyed about the year of our Lord 70, and so before that generation passed away which was contemporary with Christ; and it was about thirtyseven years after Christ's death. The destruction of the heathen empire under Constantine, was about 260 years after this. In showing how the success of the gospel was carried on through this time, I would---(1) Take notice of the opposition made against it by the Roman empire---(2) How the work of the gospel went on notwithstanding that opposition---(3) The peculiar circumstances of tribulation and distress the church was in just before their deliverance by Constantine. The great revolution of Constantine's time.

(1) I would briefly show what opposition was made against the gospel, and the kingdom of Christ, by the Roman empire. The opposition that was made to the gospel by the heathen Roman empire, was chiefly after the destruction of Jerusalem, though the opposition began before; but the opposition that was before the destruction of Jerusalem, was principally by the Jews. But when Jerusalem was destroyed, the Jews were put out of a capacity of troubling the church. Now therefore the devil turns his head elsewhere, and uses other instruments. The opposition which was made in the Roman empire against the kingdom of Christ, was of two kinds.

[1] They employed all their learning, philosophy, and wit, in opposing it. Christ, as we have observed, came into the world when learning and philosophy were at their height. This was employed to the utmost against the kingdom of Christ. The gospel, which held forth a crucified Saviour, was not at all agreeable to the notions of the philosophers. The christian scheme of trusting in such a crucified Redeemer appeared foolish and ridiculous to them. Greece was a country the most famous for learning of any in the Roman empire; but the apostle observes, that the doctrine of Christ crucified appeared foolishness to the Greeks, 1 Cor. i. 23; and therefore the wise men and philosophers opposed the gospel with all their wit. We have a specimen of their opposition in their treatment of the apostle Paul at Athens, which had been for many ages the chief seat of philosophy. We find that the philosophers of the Epicureans and Stoicks encountered him, saying, 'What will this babbler say? He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods.' Acts xvii. 18. So they were wont to deride and ridicule christianity. And after the destruction of Jerusalem, several philosophers published books against it. The chief of these were Celsus and Porphyry, who wrote against the christian religion with a great deal of virulence and contempt, much after the manner of the Deists of the present age. Some of their writings yet remain. As great enemies and despisers as they were of the christian religion, yet they never denied the facts recorded of Christ and his apostles in the New Testament, particularly the miracles which they wrought, but allowed them. They lived too near the times wherein these miracles were wrought to deny them; for they were so publicly done, and so lately, that neither Jews nor heathens in those days could deny them; but they ascribed them to the power of magic.

[2] The Roman emperors employed all their strength and policy, time after time, to persecute, and if possible to root out christianity. This they

did in ten general successive persecutions. We have before observed, that Christ came into the world when the heathen dominion and authority was at its greatest height, during the Roman empire, the most powerful human monarchy that ever was on earth. All the strength of this monarchy was employed for a long time to oppose and persecute the christian church, and if possible to destroy it, in ten successive attempts, which are called the ten heathen persecutions, which were before Constantine.

The first of these, which was the persecution under Nero, was a little before the destruction of Jerusalem, in which the apostle Peter was crucified, and the apostle Paul beheaded, soon after he wrote the second epistle to Timothy. When he wrote that epistle he was a prisoner at Rome under Nero, and expected soon to die. 2 Tim. iv. 6, 7. 'I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.'—There were also many thousands of other christians slain in that persecution.* The other nine persecutions were all after the destruction of Jerusalem. Some of these were very terrible indeed, and far exceeded the first persecution under Nero. One emperor after another set himself with the utmost rage to root out

* Of this, Tacitus, an heathen historian, and therefore the more unexceptionable authority, gives the following account: 'Nero, to suppress the prevailing rumour, that he was the author of the conflagration of Rome, transferred the guilt upon supposed criminals, subjecting to most exquisite tortures those who were known to the vulgar by the name of Christians. First, therefore, were apprehended those who openly owned themselves to be of that sect, then by them was discovered an immense multitude, and all were convicted. Their death and torture were aggravated with cruel derision and sport; for they were either covered with the skins of wild beasts, and torn in pieces by devouring dogs, or fastened to crosses, or wrapped up in combustible garments, that when the daylight failed, they might, like torches, serve to dispel the darkness of the night. For this tragic spectacle Nero lent his own gardens, and exhibited at the same time the public diversions of the circus, sometimes driving a chariot in person, and sometimes standing as a spectator. Hence, towards the sufferers, however guilty and deserving the most exemplary punishment, (so speaks the heathen) compassion arose, seeing they were doomed to perish to gratify the cruelty of one man.'

the christian church from the earth, that there should not be so much as the name of christian left in the world. Thousands and millions were put to cruel deaths in these persecutions; for they spared neither sex nor age, but killed them as fast as they could.

Under the second general persecution, that which was next after the destruction of Jerusalem, the apostle John was banished to the isle of Patmos, where he had those visions of which he has given an account in the Revelation. Under that persecution it has been supposed that above forty thousand suffered martyrdom; which yet was nothing to what were put to death under some succeeding persecutions.* Many thousands suffered cruel deaths in the third persecution under the emperor Adrian.† The fourth persecution began about the year of our Lord 162, as some reckon, and was felt even in England, the land of our forefathers, where christianity had been planted very early, and as is supposed, in the days of the apostles.‡ And in the later persecutions,

* The second general persecution was raised by Domitian, and though not lasting above a year, it was severe for the time; the tyrant not sparing his own relations, some of whom he slew, and banished others. This wretch was as blasphemous as he was cruel; and when he had transformed himself completely into the image of the devil, assumed the honours of deity, and would be called nothing less than Lord and God. Most historians agree that John's banishment to Patmos took place in this reign; but the story of his being put into boiling oil is justly rejected.

† The third persecution was under the reign of Trajan, though he is not commonly reckoned among the persecutors, because he made no new edicts against the christians. But he was highly prejudiced against them, and even himself condemned some; a remarkable instance of which occurs in the martyrdom of Ignatius, supposed to have been a disciple of the apostle John.

‡ Under the fourth persecution, or a little before, suffered another of John's disciples, Polycarp, who was called doctor of Asia and father of the christians. When urged by the proconsul to reproach and deny Christ to procure his liberty, he nobly replied, 'Eighty and six years have I now served Christ, and he has never done me the least wrong; how then can I blaspheme my King and Saviour?' When the proconsul continued, I have wild beasts ready, to those I will give thee. 'Call for them,' replied Polycarp, 'for we christians are fixed in our minds, not to change from good to evil.' The magistrate added, If thou despisest the beasts, thou shalt be devoured by fire. The martyr rejoined, 'Thou threatenest me with fire which burns but for a time, and is extinguished; but knowest not the fire of the future judgment,

the Roman emperors, being vexed at the frustration of their predecessors, who were not able to extirpate christianity, or hinder its progress, were enraged to be the more violent in their attempts.

Thus a great part of the first three hundred years after Christ, was spent in violent and cruel persecutions of the church by the Roman powers. Satan was very unwilling to quit his hold of so great a part of the world, as the Roman empire was, of which he had had the quiet possession for so many ages: and therefore when he saw it going so fast out of his hands, he bestirred himself to his utmost. All hell was as it were raised to oppose it with its utmost power.

Satan thus exerting himself by the power of the heathen Roman empire, is called the great red dragon in scripture, having seven heads and ten horns, fighting against the woman clothed with the sun. Rev. xii. 3. And the terrible conflict there was between the church of Christ, and the powers of the heathen empire before Constantine's time, is there represented, ver. 7, by the war between Michael and his angels, and the dragon and his angels. 'And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels.'

(2) I would notice the success the gospel had in the world before the time of Constantine, notwithstanding all this opposition.—Though the learning and power of the Roman empire were so great, and both were employed to the utmost against christianity to root it out, for so long a time, and in so many repeated attempts; yet all was in vain. In spite of all they could do, the kingdom of Christ wonderfully prevailed, and Satan's kingdom mouldered and consumed away before it, agreeably to the words of prophecy: 'The moth shall eat them

that eternal punishment which is reserved for the ungodly.—But why tarriest thou? bring forth what thou wilt?' Accordingly this venerable man being, as is supposed, above a hundred years old, was burnt at a stake, praising and blessing God for the honour of martyrdom.

up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool.' It was also very observable, that for the most part, the more they persecuted the church, the more it increased : insomuch that it became a common saying. ' The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.' Herein the church of Christ proved to be like a palm tree ; of which it is remarked, that the greater weight is laid upon it, or hung to its branches, the more it grows and flourishes. On this account probably the church is compared to a palm tree, Cant. vii. 7. ' This thy stature is like to a palm tree.' Justin Martyr, an eminent father in the christian church, who lived in the age next after the apostles, in some of his writings, which are yet extant, says, that in his days there was no part of mankind, whether Greeks or barbarians, or by what name soever they were called, even the most rude and unpolished nations, where prayers and thanksgivings were not made to the great Creator of the world, through the name of the crucified Jesus. Tertullian, another eminent father in the christian church, who lived in the beginning of the following age, mentions in some of his writings which are yet extant, that in his day the christian religion had extended itself to the utmost bounds of the then known world, in which he reckons Britain, the country of our forefathers ; and thence demonstrates, that the kingdom of Christ was then more extensive than any of the four great monarchies. He says moreover, that though the christians were as strangers of no long standing, yet they had filled all places of the Roman dominions, their cities, islands, castles, corporations, councils, armies, tribunes, the palace, senate, and courts of judicature. They had only left to the heathen their temples ; and that if they should all agree to retire out of the Roman empire, the world would be amazed at the solitude and desolation that would ensue, there would be so few left ; and that the christians were so numerous as to be able to defend themselves, if they were disposed to rise up in arms against the heathen magistrates. Also

Pliny, a heathen who lived in those days, says, multitudes of each sex, of every age and quality, were become christians. This superstition, says he, having infected and overrun not the city only, but towns and countries, the temples and sacrifices are generally desolate and forsaken.*

It was remarked by both heathen and christian writers in those days, that the famous heathen oracles in their temples, where princes and others for many past ages had been wont to enquire and receive answers with an audible voice from their gods, which were indeed answers from the devil; I say, those oracles were now silenced and struck dumb, and gave no more answers. Particularly the oracle at Delphos, which was the most famous heathen oracle in the whole world, which both Greeks and Romans used to consult, began to cease to give any answers, even from the birth of Christ: and the false deity who was worshipped, and used to give answers from his oracle in that temple, being once enquired of, why he did not now give answers as he was wont to do; made this reply, as several heathen historians who lived about those times relate. 'There is a Hebrew youth who is king of the gods, who has commanded me to leave this house, and be gone to hell, and therefore you are to expect no more answers.' And many of the heathen writers who lived about that time, spake much of the oracles being silenced, as a thing at which they wondered, not knowing what the cause should be.

* Even before the destruction of Jerusalem, the gospel was not only preached in the Lesser Asia, and Greece and Italy, the great theatres of action then in the world; but was likewise propagated as far northward as Scythia, as far southward as Ethiopia, as far eastward as Parthia and India, as far westward as Spain and Britain. Our ancestors of this island seem to have lain as remote from the scene of our Saviour's actions as almost any nation, and were a rough, inhospitable people, as unlikely to receive so civilized an institution as any people whatever. Yet there is some probability, that the gospel was preached here by Simon the apostle; there is much greater probability that it was preached here by Paul; and there is absolute certainty that christianity was planted in this country soon after the days of the apostles.

Plutarch, a heathen writer of those times, wrote a particular treatise about it, which is still extant. Porphyry also, one of those before mentioned, has these words : ' It is no wonder if the city for so many years has been overrun with sickness ; Esculapius, and the rest of the gods, having withdrawn their converse with men. For since Jesus began to be worshipped, no man hath received any public help or benefit from the gods.'---Thus did the kingdom of Christ prevail against the kingdom of Satan.

(3) I now proceed to notice the peculiar circumstances of tribulation and distress, just before Constantine the Great came to the throne. This distress they suffered under the tenth persecution, which as it was the last, so it was by far the heaviest and most severe. The church before this, after the ceasing of the ninth persecution, had enjoyed a time of quietness for about forty years together ; but abusing their liberty, began to grow cold and lifeless in religion, and contentions prevailed among them. By this they offended God, who suffered this dreadful trial to come upon them. And Satan having lost ground so much, notwithstanding all his attempts, now seemed to bestir himself with more than ordinary rage. Those who were then in authority set themselves with the utmost violence to root out christianity, by burning all bibles, and destroying all christians ; and therefore they did not stand to try or convict them in a formal process, but fell upon them wherever they could ; sometimes setting fire to houses where multitudes of them were assembled, and burning them therein, and at other times slaughtering multitudes together. Their persecutors were sometimes quite spent with the labour of killing and tormenting them ; and in some populous places so many were slain together, that the blood ran like torrents. It is related, that seventeen thousand martyrs were slain in one month's time ; and that during the continuance of this persecution, in the province of Egypt alone, no less than a hundred and forty four thousand christians died by the

violence of their persecutors, besides seven hundred thousand who perished through the fatigues of banishment, or the public works to which they were condemned.

This persecution lasted for ten years together ; and as it exceeded all foregoing persecutions in the number of martyrs, so it exceeded them in the variety and multitude of inventions of torture and cruelty. Some authors who lived at that time say, they were innumerable, and exceeded all calculation. This persecution in particular was very severe in England ;* and this is that persecution which was foretold in Rev. vi. 9, 10. ‘ And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, oh Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth ?’

At the end of the ten years during which this persecution continued, the heathen persecutors thought they had finished their work, and boasted that they had utterly destroyed the name and superstition of the christians, and propagated the worship of the gods. Thus it was the darkest time with the christian church, just before the break of day. They were brought to the greatest extremity just before God appeared for their glorious deliverance ; as the bondage of the Israelits in Egypt was the most severe and cruel, just before their deliverance by the hand of Moses. Their enemies thought they had swallowed them up just before their destruction, as it was with Pharaoh and his host when they

* In the persecution under Dioclesian, the British christians suffered so much, that the very name of christianity was lost in this island, except among the Cornish and Welsh. Our proto-martyr St. Alban, Amphibolus, Julian, and Aaron were martyred in the town of St. Alban's, then called Verulam. The priests who wrote of St. Alban's martyrdom, could not be content with the courage, patience, and piety of the martyr, but have corrupted his history with lies. Even venerable Bede cannot help telling us, that he dried up a river as he went to the place of execution ; that his head spoke after it was cut off &c. [Critical Hist. of Engl. vol. i. p. 64.]

had hemmed in the children of Israel at the Red Sea.

(4) I come now, in the fourth place, to the great revolution effected in the days of Constantine, which was in many respects like Christ's appearing in the clouds of heaven to save his people, and judge the world. The people of Rome being weary of the government of those tyrants to whom they had lately been subject, sent to Constantine, who was then in the city of York in England, to come and take the throne. Being encouraged, as it is said, by a vision of a pillar of light in the heavens, in the form of a cross, in the sight of his whole army, with this inscription, 'By this conquer;' and the night following, by Christ's appearing to him in a dream with the same cross in his hand, who directed him to make a cross like that to be his royal standard, that his army might fight under that banner, and assured him that he should overcome.* Accordingly he did, and overcame his enemies, took possession of the imperial throne, embraced the christian religion, and was the first Christian Emperor that ever reigned. He came to the throne about 320 years after Christ. There are several things which I should wish to notice, that attended or immediately followed Constantine's coming to the throne.

[1] The christian church was thereby wholly delivered from persecution. Now the day of her deliverance came after such a dark night of affliction; weeping had continued for a night, but now deliverance and joy came in the morning. Now God appeared to judge his people, and repented himself for his servants, when he saw their power was gone, and that there was none shut up or left. Christians had no persecutions now to fear. Their persecutors were all put down, and their rulers were some of them christians like themselves.

* Whatever fabulous circumstances may have been added to this story, or absurd inferences drawn from it, it should seem there was some truth in it, since Eusebius assures us, that he had it from the emperor's own mouth.

[2] God now appeared to execute terrible judgments on their enemies. Remarkable are the accounts which history gives us of the fearful ends to which the heathen emperors, princes, generals, captains, and other great men came, who had exerted themselves in persecuting the christians. They died miserably one after another, under exquisite torments of body, and horrors of conscience; and the hand of God was visibly upon them. So that what now came to pass might very fitly be compared to their hiding themselves in the dens and rocks of the mountains. Rev. vi. 15—17.

[3] Heathenism now was in a great measure abolished throughout the Roman empire. Images were now destroyed, and heathen temples pulled down. Images of gold and silver were melted down, and coined into money. Some of the chief of their idols, which were curiously wrought, were brought to Constantinople, and there drawn with ropes up and down the streets for the people to behold and laugh at. The heathen priests were dispersed and banished.

[4] The christian church was brought into a state of great peace and prosperity. Now all heathen magistrates were put down, and only christians were advanced to places of authority all over the empire. They had now christian presidents, christian governors, christian judges and officers, instead of their old heathenish ones. Constantine set himself to honour the christian bishops or ministers, and to build and adorn churches; and now large and beautiful christian churches were erected in all parts of the world, instead of the old heathen temples.

This was the greatest revolution in the face of things that ever came to pass since the flood. Satan, the prince of darkness, that king and god of the heathen world, was cast out. The roaring lion was conquered by the lamb of God, in the strongest dominion that ever he had, even the Roman empire. This was a remarkable accomplishment of that prophecy, Jer. x. 11. 'The gods that have not made

the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens.' The chief part of the world was now brought utterly to cast off their old gods and their old religion, to which they had been accustomed much longer than any of their histories gives an account of; so long that they could not trace the beginning of it. It was formerly spoken of as a thing unknown for a nation to change their gods, Jer. ii. 10, 11; but now the greater part of the nations of the known world were brought to cast off all their former idols. Thousands of them were cast away for the worship of the true God, and Christ the only Saviour: and there was a most remarkable fulfilment of that promise, Isai. ii. 17, 18. 'The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And the idols he shall utterly abolish.' And since that, it has come to pass, that those gods that were once so famous in the world, as Jupiter, Saturn, Minerva, and Juno, are only heard of as things which were of old; they have no temples, no altars, no worshippers, and have not had for many hundred years.

Now is come the end of the old heathen world in the principal part of it, the Roman empire. And this great revolution and change of the state of the world, with that terrible destruction of the great men who had been persecutors, is compared to the end of the world, and Christ's coming to judgment; and is what is more immediately signified under the sixth seal, which followed upon the souls under the altar crying, 'How long, oh Lord, holy and true, dost thou not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?' Rev. vi. This vision of the sixth seal, by the general consent of divines and expositors, has respect to this downfall of the heathen Roman empire, though it may have a more remote respect to the day of judgment; but that cannot be what is immediately intended, because we have an

account of many events which were to come to pass afterwards, yet before the end of the world.

This revolution is also represented by the devil's being cast out of heaven to the earth. In his great strength and glory, in that mighty Roman empire, he had as it were exalted his throne up to heaven. But now he fell like lightning from heaven, and was confined to the earth. His kingdom was limited to the meaner and more barbarous nations, or to the lower parts of the world of mankind. Rev. xii. 9. 'The great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.' Satan tempted Christ, and promised to give him the glory of the kingdoms of the world; but now he is obliged to give it to him, even against his will. This was a glorious fulfilment of that promise which God made to his Son, Isai. liii. 12. 'Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.' This was a great fulfilment of the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the glorious time of the gospel, and particularly of the prophecies of Daniel. Now the kingdom of heaven is come in a glorious degree. It pleased the Lord God of heaven to set up a kingdom on the ruins of that of Satan. Such is the success of the purchase of Christ's redemption, and such honour does the Father put upon Christ for the disgrace he suffered when on earth. And now see to what a height that glorious building is raised, which had been erecting ever since the fall.

FROM what has been said of the success of the gospel from Christ's ascension to the time of Constantine, we may deduce a strong argument of the truth of the christian religion, and that the gospel

of Jesus Christ is really from God. This wonderful success which has been spoken of, and the circumstances of it which have been mentioned, are a strong argument of it several ways.

(1) We may observe that it is the gospel, and that only, which has actually been the means of bringing the world to the knowledge of the true God. That those are no gods whom the heathen worshipped, and that there is but one only God, is what, now since the gospel has so taught us, we can see to be truth by our own reason. It is plainly agreeable to the light of nature; it can easily be shown by reason to be demonstrably true. The very deists themselves acknowledge that it can be demonstrated, that there is one God, and but one, who has made and governs the world. But now it is evident that it is the gospel, and that only, which has actually been the means of bringing men to the knowledge of this truth; it was not the instructions of philosophers. They tried in vain: 'The world by wisdom knew not God.' 1 Cor. i. 21. Till the gospel and the holy scriptures came abroad in the world, all the world lay in ignorance of the true God, and in the greatest darkness with respect to the things of religion, embracing the absurdest opinions and practices, by all civilized nations now acknowledged to be childish fooleries. And so they lay one age after another, and nothing proved effectual to enlighten them. The light of nature, and their own reason, and all the wisdom of learned men availed nothing; but the scriptures brought the world to an acknowledgement of the one only true God, and to worship and serve him.

Hence it was that all who now own the one true God, Christians, Jews, Mahometans, and even Deists, originally came by the knowledge of him. It is owing to this that they are not in general at this day left in heathenish darkness. They have it either immediately from the scriptures, or by tradition from their fathers, who had it at first therefrom. Doubtless those who now despise the scriptures, and

boast of the strength of their own reason, as being sufficient to lead them to the knowledge of the only true God, if the gospel had never come abroad in the world to enlighten their forefathers, would have been as brutish idolaters as the world in general was before the gospel came abroad. The Mahometans, who own but one true God, at first borrowed the notion from the Bible; for the first Mahometans had been educated in the christian religion, and apostatized from it. This shows that the scriptures were designed to be the means of bringing the world to the knowledge of himself, rather than human reason, or any thing else. For it is unreasonable to suppose that the gospel, and that only, which God never designed to this end, should actually effect it, and that after human reason, which he designed as the proper means, had been tried for a great many ages in vain. —If the scriptures be not the word of God, then they are the greatest delusion that ever was. Now, is it reasonable to suppose, that God in his providence would make use of falsehood and delusion, and that only, to bring the world to the knowledge of himself?

(2) The success of the gospel against such powerful opposition plainly shows the hand of God. The Roman government, which so violently set itself to hinder the success of the gospel, and to subdue the church of Christ, was the most powerful human government that ever existed, and they seemed to have the church in their hands. The christians were mostly their subjects, and never took up arms in their own defence; they armed themselves with nothing but patience, and such like spiritual weapons. Yet this mighty power could not conquer them; but on the contrary, christianity conquered that. The Romans had subdued many mighty and potent kingdoms; they subdued the Grecian monarchy, when they were not their subjects, and made the utmost resistance; and yet they could not conquer the church which was in their hands; but on the contrary, were finally triumphed over by it.

(3) No other sufficient cause can possibly be assigned of this propagation of the gospel, but God's own power. Here was a great and wonderful effect, the most remarkable change that ever was in the face of the world of mankind since the flood, and this effect was not without some cause. Now, what other cause can be devised but only the divine power? It was not the outward strength of the instruments which were employed in it. At first the gospel was preached only by a few fishermen, who were without power and worldly interest to support them. It was not their craft and policy that produced this wonderful effect, for they were but poor illiterate men. It was not the agreeableness of the story they had to tell, to the notions and principles of mankind. This was no pleasant fable: a crucified Redeemer was to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness. It was not the agreeableness of their doctrines to men's dispositions; for nothing is more contrary to the corruptions of men than the pure doctrines of the gospel. This effect therefore can have proceeded from no other cause than the power and agency of God: and if the power of God was exercised to cause the gospel to prevail, then the gospel is his word: for surely God does not use his almighty power to promote imposture or delusion.

(4) This success is agreeable to what Christ and his apostles had foretold. Matt. xvi. 18. 'Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' John xii. 24, 31, 32. 'Verily verily I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.' John xvi. 8. 'When he (the comforter) is come, he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, ---because the prince of this world is judged.'

So the apostle Paul declares, that after the world

by wisdom knew not God, 'It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe;' and that God chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and weak things of the world to confound the thing which are mighty; and base things, yea and things that are not, to bring to nought things that are. 1 Cor. i. 21—28. If any man foretels a thing, very likely in itself to come to pass, from causes which can be foreseen, it is no argument of a revelation from God: but when a thing is foretold which is very unlikely ever to come to pass, which is entirely contrary to the common course of things, yet it comes to pass just as foretold, this is a strong argument that the prediction was from God.

Thus the consideration of the manner of the propagation and success of the gospel, during the time which has been spoken of, affords great evidence that the scriptures are the word of God.

3. I am now to show how the success of Christ's redemption is carried on from the time of the overthrow of the heathen Roman empire by Constantine the Great, till the fall of antichrist, and the destruction of Satan's visible kingdom on earth, which is the third great dispensation that is in scripture compared to Christ's coming to judgment. This period contains many wonderful providences towards the christian church, and the greater part of the book of the Revelation is taken up in predicting these events.

The success of Christ's purchase of redemption in this period appears chiefly at the close of it, when Antichrist comes to fall, when there will be a far more glorious success of the gospel than ever yet has been; and the series of events preceding, seems to be only to prepare the way for it. In order to a clearer view of this period, I shall subdivide it into these four parts: from the destruction of the heathen empire to the rise of antichrist, from the rise of antichrist to the reformation in Luther's time, from

thence to the present time, from the present time till the fall of antichrist. But under this head I shall consider only the former, reaching from the destruction of the heathen empire to the rise of antichrist. And here, (1) I would take notice of the opposition Satan made in this space of time to the church; and, (2) the success that the gospel had in it.

(1) The Opposition. Satan being cast out of his old heathen empire, the great red dragon after so sore a conflict with Michael and his angels for the greater part of three hundred years, being at last entirely routed and vanquished, so that no place was found any more in heaven for him, but he was cast down as it were from heaven to earth; yet does not give over his opposition to the woman, the church of Christ, concerning which all this conflict had been. But he is still in a great rage, renews his attempts, and has recourse to fresh devices against the church. The serpent, after he is cast out of heaven to the earth, casts out of his mouth water as a flood, to cause the woman to be carried away of the flood. Rev. xii. 15. The opposition that he made to the church of Christ before the rise of antichrist, was principally of two sorts. It was either by corrupting the church with heresies, or by new endeavours to restore paganism.

[1] After the destruction of the Heathen Roman empire, Satan infested the church with heresies. Though there had been so glorious a work of God in delivering the church from her heathen persecutors, and overthrowing the heathen empire; yet the days of the church's travail were not ended, and the set time of her prosperity which the church enjoyed in Constantine's time was but very short. It was a respite which gave the church a time of peace and silence, as it were for half an hour, wherein the four angels held the four winds from blowing, till the servants of God should be sealed in their foreheads. Rev. viii. 1. But the church soon began to be greatly infested with heresies; the two principal ones

that most infested the church, were the Arian and Pelagian heresies.

The Arians began soon after Constantine came to the throne. They denied the doctrine of the Trinity, and the divinity of Christ and the Holy Ghost, and maintained that they were but mere creatures.* This heresy increased more and more in the church, and prevailed like a flood, which threatened to overthrow all, and entirely to carry away the church, insomuch that before that age was out, that is, before the end of the fourth century, the greater part of the christian church were become Arians. There were some emperors, the successors of Constantine, who were Arians; so that the Arians being the prevailing party, and having the civil authority on their side, raised a great persecution against the true church of Christ. This heresy might therefore well be compared to a flood, issuing out of the mouth of the serpent, which threatened to carry away the woman.

The Pelagian heresy arose in the beginning of the next century. It began by one Pelagius, who was born in Britain: his British name was Morgan.† He denied original sin, and the influence of the Spirit of God in conversion, and held the power of free will, and many other things of like tendency: and this heresy for a while greatly infested the

* The Arians were so called from Arius, a priest of the church of Alexandria, and a native of Lybia. Afterwards they were split into a great number of sects, partly from the degree of refinement in which the notions of Arius were received; some approaching very near the language of the orthodox, as they were called, and others degrading the Son of God far more than Arius had done; and partly from other strange and erroneous opinions added to his, which bore the name of some favourite leader. The grand champion of the orthodox was Athanasius, who would better have defended their cause, had he adhered to the simplicity of scripture, and not fettered christianity with his own additions and refinements. To him we are indebted for the Athanasian Creed, though few liberal minds think highly of the obligation, and fewer can endure the curses he has introduced into the religious worship of the greater part of christendom.

† In Britain this system was supported not by the authors of it, but by Agricola, a disciple of Pelagius. This produced as usual, an excommunication; for the ecclesiastical surgeons of those days seem to have understood no part of their business so well as amputation.

church. Pelagius's principal antagonist, who wrote in defence of the orthodox faith, was St. Augustine.

[2] The other kind of opposition which Satan made against the church, was in his endeavours to restore Paganism. And his first attempt to restore it in the Roman empire, was by Julian the apostate. Julian was nephew to Constantine the Great. When Constantine died, he left his empire to his three sons; and when they were dead, Julian reigned in their stead. He had been a professed christian, but fell from christianity, and turned Pagan; and therefore is called the apostate. When he came to the throne, he used his utmost endeavours to overthrow the christian church, and set up paganism again in the empire. He put down the christian magistrates, and placed heathens in their room: he rebuilt the heathen temples, and became a most notorious persecutor of the christians, and, as is thought, against his own light. He used to call Christ, by way of reproach, the Galilean. He was killed with a lance in his wars with the Persians. When he saw that he was mortally wounded, he took a handful of his blood, and threw it up towards heaven, crying out, 'Oh Galilean, thou hast conquered.*' And he is commonly thought by divines to have committed the unpardonable sin.†

Another way that Satan attempted to restore paganism in the Roman empire, was by the invasions and conquest of heathen nations. For in this period the Goths and Vandals, and other heathen barbarous nations that dwelt in the north of the Roman empire, invaded it, and obtained great conquests, and

* Among the instances of Julian's opposition to christianity, historians generally mention his attempt to rebuild Jerusalem and restore judaism, which was miraculously defeated, subterraneous fire repeatedly consuming both the work and workmen.

† The sin against the Holy Ghost is supposed to be a complication of knowledge and inveterate malice. Had Peter denied his Master with the malicious heart of Saul the persecutor, or Saul persecuted Jesus with the light that Peter possessed, either of them would have committed this sin. Matt. xii. 21-22.

even overran the empire. In the fifth century they took the city of Rome, and finally subdued and took possession of the western empire, as it was called, and divided it into ten kingdoms, which were the ten horns of the beast; for we are told that the ten horns are ten kings, who should rise in the latter part of the Roman empire.* These are also represented by the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image. The invasion and conquest of the heathen nations are supposed to be foretold in the eighth chapter of Revelation, in what came to pass under the sounding of the four first trumpets.† Now these nations were chiefly heathens; and by their means heathenism was again for a while in part restored, after it had been overthrown.

(2) I proceed to show what success there was of the gospel in this space, notwithstanding this opposition.

[1] The opposition of Satan was baffled. Though the dragon cast out of his mouth such a flood after the woman to carry her away, yet he could not obtain his design; but the earth helped the woman, and opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. Rev. xii. 16. These heresies which so much prevailed, yet after a while dwindled away, and truth was again

* The ten horns of the beast are generally reckoned thus: 1. The Vandals and Alans in Spain and Africa; 2. The Suevians in Spain; 3. the Visigoths; 4. the Allans in Gallia; 5. the Burgundians; 6. the Franks; 7. the Britons; 8. the Hunns; 9. the Lombards; 10. the kingdom of Ravenna.

† The four first trumpets.] The first trumpet produces a storm of fire, of hail mingled with fire, and very fitly represents the Goths under Alarie, who are compared to a storm of hail by Claudian. This period was also remarkable for lightning and hail.—At the second trumpet a burning mountain is cast into the sea, which was Attali and his Hunns, a few years after the former. He called himself the 'scourge of God and the terror of men.'—At the sounding of the third trumpet the star wormwood falls from heaven, supposed to predict Genseric, a persecuting Arian, king of the Vandals.—By the fourth trumpet, the political luminaries of the empire were terribly eclipsed, which was effected by Odoacer king of the Heruli, who put an end to the very name of the western empire, and was proclaimed king of Italy; but was soon removed by Theodoric king of the Ostrogoths, who resumed his place. The bloodshed and other calamities, which attended these revolutions, are beyond conception. [See Bp. Newton on the Prophecies, vol. iii.

restored. As for Julian's attempt, it was disappointed by his death.

[2] The gospel, during this space of time, was farther propagated among many barbarous heathen nations in the confines of the heathen Roman empire. In the time of Constantine there was a considerable propagation of the gospel in the East Indies, chiefly by the ministry of one Frumentius. Great numbers of the Iberians, a pagan people, were converted to christianity by a christian woman of eminent piety, whom they had taken captive. And among several other barbarous nations who were not within the Roman empire, great numbers were brought to receive the gospel by the teaching and example of captives whom they had taken in war. After this, about the year of Christ 372, the gospel was propagated in Arabia; as it was also among some of the northern nations; particularly a prince of the country of the Goths about this time became christian, and a great number of his people with him. Towards the latter end of this century, the gospel was preached among the Persians; also among the Scythians, a barbarous people, whom the apostle mentions, Col. iii. 11. 'Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free.' About the year 430, there was a remarkable conversion of the Burgundians to the christian faith. In this age Ireland, which till now had been heathen, received christianity. About the same time it was farther propagated in Scotland and other places. In the next century, one Zathus, king of the Colchians, renounced heathenism, and embraced the christian religion, as did several other barbarous nations which I cannot particularize.*

* Early in the fifth century, France became nominally christian, on the following occasion: Clovis i. a pagan prince, fell in love with Clotilde, a christian princess; and in order to obtain her, promised to receive her religion. This however he had like to have forgotten, had he not a few years after been in danger of losing an important battle; then he renewed his vow of turning christian, if he might gain the victory, which accordingly happening, he was baptized, with his sister, and three thousand of his subjects. A few years after Pope Gregory, in wonderful charity, sent Austin, and a tribe of other monks, to convert our Saxon ancestors, (the natives having fled to Wales) and had

Thus I have briefly considered the principal events of providence which concerns the success of the gospel from Constantine to the rise of antichrist.

4. I come now to the second part of the time from Constantine to the destruction of antichrist, viz. that which reaches from the rise of antichrist to the reformation by Luther and others. And this is the darkest and most dismal day that ever the christian church saw, and probably the darkest that ever it will see. The time of the church's affliction, as was observed before, is from Christ's resurrection till the destruction of antichrist, excepting that the day is as it were shortened by some intermissions and times of respite, which God gives for the elect's sake. Matt. xxiv. 22. But during this time, from the rise of antichrist till the reformation, was a space in which the christian church was in its depression and darkness. For many hundred years it was in a state of great obscurity, like the woman in the wilderness, almost hidden from sight and observation. Rev. xii. 6.—In speaking of the events of this period, I would, (1) Take notice of the machinations of the devil against the kingdom of Christ in this time; (2) How the church of Christ was upheld during it.

(1) Notice the machinations of the devil against the kingdom of Christ during this period. Satan had done great things against the christian church before, but had been baffled again and again. Michael and his angels had obtained a glorious victory. How terrible was his opposition during the continuance of the heathen empire; and how glorious was Christ's victory and triumph over him in the time of Constantine. It pleased God now to prepare the way for a yet greater victory over him,

such success as to found the see of Canterbury, of which he was the first archbishop. But it is to be feared, that the grand aim of the Roman pontiff was to enlarge his power, and the zeal of Austin and his fellow labourers to propagate the trumpery of popery, rather than the doctrines of the gospel. There is no doubt but providence overruled all these events for good, and amidst the superstition of the times, there were always some who would not bow the knee to Baal.

to suffer him to renew his strength, and to do the utmost that his power and subtilty could do; and therefore he suffers him to have a long time to form his schemes, and to establish his interest; and permits him to carry his designs a great length, almost to the swallowing up of his church; and to exercise a proud, and almost uncontroled dominion, a long time before Christ finally conquers, and utterly ruins his visible kingdom on earth, as he will do in the time of the destruction of antichrist, whence he will show himself superior to all his power and subtilty. The two grand works of the devil which he wrought in this space against the kingdom of Christ, are his Antichristian and Mahometan kingdoms, which have been, and still are, of great extent and strength, both together swallowing up the antient Roman empire; that of Antichrist the western, and Mahomet's the eastern empire. It is in the destruction of these that the victory of Christ, at the introduction of the glorious times of the church, will chiefly consist. Here let us briefly observe how Satan has erected and still maintains these two great kingdoms in opposition to that of Christ.

[1] With respect to the kingdom of Antichrist. This seems to be the masterpiece of all the devil's contrivances, and therefore antichrist is called emphatically the or that 'man of sin,' 2 Thess. ii. 3, as though he were so by way of eminence. He is also called antichrist, which signifies the adversary of Christ. Not that he is the only opponent of Christ; for the apostle John observes, that in his days there were many antichrists. 1 John ii. 18, 22. But yet this is called the antichrist, as though there were no other, because he was so eminently, and above all others. So this contrivance of the devil is called the mystery of iniquity, 2 Thess. ii. 7. And we find no enemy of Christ half so much spoken of in the prophecies of the Revelation as this, or his destruction spoken of as so happy for the church. See also Dan. vii. 20, 21. 1 Tim. iv. 1. 1 John iv. 3.

This is a contrivance of the devil to turn the ministry of the christian church into his service, and change these angels of the churches into fallen angels. And in the tyranny, superstition, idolatry, and persecution which he sets up, he contrives to make an image of ancient paganism, and more than to restore what was lost in the empire by the overthrow of heathenism in the time of Constantine; so that by these means the head of the beast, which was wounded unto death in Constantine, has his deadly wound healed in antichrist, Rev. xiii. 3. And the dragon, that formerly reigned in the heathen Roman empire, being cast out thence, after the beast with seven heads and ten horns rises up out of the sea, gives him his power, and seat, and great authority: and all the world wonders after the beast.*

* *The Image of the Beast.*

The Pagan Dragon.		His Popish Image.
		<i>Its Head.</i>
The Roman Emperor, called the high priest, attended with his princes in royal purple.		The Pope, also called the sovereign Pontif, with his college of cardinals clothed in purple.
		<i>Its Members.</i>
The Roman provinces.		The Catholic states.
		<i>Its Gods.</i>
Besides Jupiter the supreme, Juno, and a multitude of deities of different ranks, mediators and intercessors; presiding over different countries, professions, diseases, days, &c.		Besides the blessed Trinity, the Virgin Mary, mother of God and queen of heaven, with innumerable saints worshipped as mediators and intercessors; presiding over various countries, professions, diseases, days, &c.
		<i>Places of Worship.</i>
Temples built east and west, dedicated to their several gods; and one in particular to them all, and therefore called the Pantheon.		The same temples, consecrated anew, with others built upon the same plan, and dedicated to their different saints; and the same Pantheon dedicated to all saints.
		<i>Manner of Worship.</i>
Through the medium of rich images, with great splendour and innumerable ceremonies, magnificent garments, many musical instruments, torches at noon day, &c.		By the same, or similar images, with equal splendour, many of the same ceremonies, the like garments, many musical instruments, torches at noon day, &c.

See De Laune's plea, where the parallel is pursued through several other heads, and properly illustrated with particular instances. Also Dr. Middleton's Letter from Rome, who has carried the subject still farther, and observes, when we see 'the present people of Rome worshipping at this day in the same temples, at the same altars, sometimes the same images and always with the same ceremonies, as the old

I am far from pretending to determine the time when the reign of antichrist began, which is a point that has been so much controverted among divines and expositors. It is certain that the 1260 days, or years, which is so often mentioned in scripture as the time of the continuance of antichrist's reign, did not commence before the year of Christ 479: because if they did, they would have ended, and antichrist would have fallen before now. But the rise of antichrist was gradual.* The christian church corrupted itself in many things presently after Constantine's time, growing more and more superstitious in its worship, by degrees bringing in many ceremonies into the worship of God, till at length they brought in the worship of saints, and set up images in their churches, and the clergy in general, and especially the bishop of Rome, assumed more and more authority to himself. In the primitive times he was only a minister of a congregation; then a standing moderator of a presbytery, a diocesan bishop, a metropolitan, which is equivalent to an archbishop, a patriarch. Then he claimed the power of universal bishop over the whole christian church, wherein he was opposed for a while, but confirmed in it by the civil power of the emperor in the year 606. After that he claimed the power of a temporal prince; and so was wont to carry two swords, to signify both his temporal and spiritual power, and assumed more and more authority, till at length he, as Christ's vicegerent on earth, claimed the very same power that Christ would have, if he was present on earth, and reigned on his throne, or the same power that belongs to God. He even used to be

Romans; they must have more charity as well as skill in distinguishing, than I pretend to, who can absolve them from the same crime of superstition and idolatry with their pagan ancestors.'

* The best interpreters are pretty well agreed, that this reign is to be dated from about the year 756, when the pope began to be a temporal power, (that is, in prophetic language, a beast) by assuming temporal dominion; 1260 years from this period will bring us to about the years 2000, and about the six thousandth year of the world, which agrees with an ancient tradition. 'In six thousand years shall all things be accomplished.'

called God on earth, and was submitted to by all the princes of christendom. He claimed power to crown princes, and to degrade them at his pleasure; and brought kings and emperors to kiss his feet. Emperors were wont to receive their crowns at his hands, and princes dreaded the displeasure of the pope, as they would have done a thunderbolt from heaven; for if the pope was pleased to excommunicate a prince, all his subjects were at once freed from their allegiance, and even obliged to renounce it on pain of excommunication; and not only so, but any man might kill him wherever he were found. Further, the pope was believed to have power to damn men at pleasure; for whosoever died under his excommunication, was looked upon as certainly lost. Several emperors were actually deposed, and died miserably by his means; and if the people of any state or kingdom did not please him, he could lay that state or kingdom under an interdict, whereby all sacred administrations among them could have no validity. There could be no valid sacraments, prayers, preaching, or pardons till that interdict was taken off; so that people remained, in their apprehension, in a damnable state, and therefore dreaded it as they would a storm of fire and brimstone from heaven. And in order to execute his wrath on a prince or people with whom the pope was displeased, other princes must be also put to a great deal of trouble and expence.

As the pope with his clergy robbed the people of their ecclesiastical and civil liberties and privileges, so he also robbed them of their estates, and drained all christendom of their money, ingrossing their riches into his own coffers, by revenues of the clergy, pardons, indulgencies, baptisms, and extreme unctions, deliverance out of purgatory, and a hundred other things.*---See how well this agrees with

* Some Account of the Fees of the Pope's Chancery for Absolutions, Licences, Indulgences, &c.

	ABSOLUTIONS.	Gro. ts.
For lying with a woman in the church	- - - - -	6
For wilful perjury	- - - - -	6

the prophecies above referred to. 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4. Dan. vii. 20, 21. Rev. xiii. 6, 7. and xvii. 3, 4.

	Groats.
A priest for Simony - - - - -	7
A layman for murdering a layman - - - - -	5
For killing father, mother, wife, sister, or other relative - - - - -	7
For a priest that keeps a concubine - - - - -	7
For defiling a virgin - - - - -	6
For lying with mother, or sister, &c - - - - -	5
For robbery, or burning a neighbour's house - - - - -	8
For forging letters apostolical - - - - -	17 or 18
For a king going to the holy sepulchre without licence - - - - -	100

LICENCES.

To change a vow of going to Rome - - - - -	12
That a king, on Christmas-day morning, may have a naked sword borne before him, as the pope has - - - - -	150
To have a portable altar - - - - -	10
To eat flesh in Lent, &c. - - - - -	12 or 16
That one who preaches before a king, may give indulgence to all his hearers - - - - -	12
For a town that hath used green wax in its seal, to use red - - - - -	50
For a layman to chuse his confessor - - - - -	10

INDULGENCIES.

For an hospital or chapel for seven years - - - - -	50
That a layman may remove the relics of saints to his own chapel - - - - -	16
For a remission of the third part of one's sins - - - - -	100

Indulgences were often granted to whole fraternities, and sometimes for a thousand years or more. It is almost incredible what sums of money are drawn into the Pope's coffer, by these and other little devices that depend upon them; as masses, requiems, trentals, obits; as also by Peter-pence, tenths, first fruits, appeals, investitures; by the sale of Angus Dei's consecrated beads, and such like ware sent from Rome every year; by dispensations, mortuaries, pilgrimages to the apostolic see, especially at the jubilee. Some have computed that the tenths and first fruits in this nation amounted to above £20,000 per annum, which was no small sum in those times, nay, one archbishop's pall (Walter Grey's of York) cost £10,000 sterling, says Matthew Paris. In our Henry the Third's time it was reckoned that the pope's revenue out of this nation exceeded the king's; and some that have endeavoured to make the estimate tell us, that there went 60,000 marks yearly out of this land to Rome; in collecting which sums, the frauds and cruelties of their agents were such, that a great bigot of the pope's assures us, 'That the legates of the apostolical seat tyrannized over the provinces, as if the devil was gone out from the presence of the Lord to scourge the church.'

'Nor had our neighbours much better treatment; the same trade was carried on in other countries, witness the complaint of the Germans in their hundred grievances; and that of the council of Spain, mentioned by Sandys, that Pope Pius v. had got 14 millions out of that kingdom in a short space. And Ciracella affirms, that Pope Sixtus v. in five years time collected five millions of crowns; four millions of which Gregory xiv. his successor, wasted in pomp and riot in less than ten months.

'Now need we wonder at this, considering how many hands were

During this time also, superstition and ignorance more and more prevailed. The holy scriptures by degrees were taken out of the hands of the laity, the better to promote the unscriptural and wicked designs of the pope and his clergy; and instead of promoting knowledge among the people, they industriously promoted ignorance. It was a received maxim among them, that ignorance is the mother of devotion: and so great was the darkness of those times, that learning was almost extinct in the world. Most of the priests themselves were barbarously ignorant, as to any other knowledge than their infernal craft in oppressing and tyrannizing over the souls of the people. The superstition and wickedness of the church of Rome kept growing worse and worse till the very time of the Reformation; and the whole christian world were led away into this grand defection, except the Greek church, and some others, which were sunk into equal darkness and superstition; except also a few that were the people of God, who are represented by the woman in the wilderness, and God's two witnesses, of which more hereafter.

This is the chief of those two great kingdoms which the devil in this period erected in opposition to the kingdom of Christ. I come now,

[2] To speak of the other, which is in many respects like unto it, viz. his Mahometan kingdom, which is also of mighty power and vast extant, set

employed? The grand fisherman at Rome had a multitude in every country to angle partly for him, and partly for themselves. Alsted reckons above a hundred years ago, that there were then at least 225, 044 monasteries in christendom; and if you allow forty persons to a house, the number will be more than nine millions. Now all these, and the rest of the ecclesiastics, which, like locusts, had overspread the face of the earth, lived upon the plunder of the people. Besides, they had a thousand little tricks and devices in getting money; they could sell a dead man's bones at a vast sum; Austin's particularly (that were translated from Hippo to Sardinia) were purchased at a hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold: and having almost an infinite variety of ware, which they put off at no small rate, they took advantage of the superstition and credulity of their silly chapmen.' [BENNET'S Mem. of the Reform. p. 27—29. See also Fuller's Church Hist. Book v.]

up by Satan against the kingdom of Christ. This was set up in the eastern empire, as that of anti-christ in the western.

Mahomet was born in the year of Christ 571, in Arabia. When he was about forty years of age, he began to give out that he was the great prophet of God, sent to teach his new religion, of which he was to be considered as the head next under God. He published his Koran,* which he pretended to have received from the angel Gabriel: and being a crafty man, possessed of considerable wealth, and living among a people who were very ignorant, and greatly

* Very different characters are given of this celebrated book by Mahometans and Christians; the following hints are designed to give an impartial, though concise view of it, and balance the opposite accounts.

1. It must be confessed to contain many sublime ideas; and for the elegance and correctness of its stile, is considered as the standard of the Arabian language. It also contains a number of fine moral observations, and excellent precepts, particularly on the articles of justice and alms-deeds.

2. On the other hand it is equally true, the koran contains a great number of absurdities and falsehoods; tales too absurd for superannation to relate, or infancy to believe: nay, a variety of injunctions the most tyrannical and sanguinary that ever were delivered; witness his laws concerning women, infidels, revenge, &c.

3. In reply to our first remark, christian writers have observed that the sublimest of his ideas and the best of his precepts were probably borrowed from his conversation with Jews and Christians; not to mention the current story of his being assisted by a Jew and a Monk, which Mr. Gibbon will not admit.

4. In answer to our second observation, many of the Mahometan doctors pretend that the reveries we despise are mere allegories, and capable of a mystical explication, neither carnal nor ridiculous. The precepts which we condemn, they also justify as perfectly consistent with the ideas of eastern nations, though they appear strange and arbitrary to the western world.

5. Practising the grand christian precept of doing as we would be done by, and making all reasonable allowances; still nothing can reason away the imposture of feigned revelations, nothing can justify the tyranny of many of his laws, nothing palliate the cruelty and bloodshed that frequently marked his conquests.

6. Lastly, in one view, however, we may contemplate Mahometanism with pleasure and instruction, as it affords a powerful argument in defence of christianity, and contains, even in the koran, its own refutation. Mahomet allows the mission both of Moses and of Christ, and thus confirms both the Old Testament and the New; and yet (wonderful inconsistency!) with neither of these can his doctrines in any manner be reconciled. He admits that both the Jewish legislator and the Messiah of the gospels were commissioned from above, and yet if either be admitted, Mahomet must certainly be rejected as an enthusiast or an impostor.

divided in their opinions on religious matters, by subtilty, and fair promises of a sensual paradise, he gained a number to be his followers, set up for their prince, propagated his religion by the sword, and made it meritorious of paradise to fight for him. By which means his party grew, and went on fighting till they conquered and brought over the neighbouring countries; and so his party gradually increased till they overran a great part of the world.* First, the Saracens, who were some of his followers, and were a people of the country of Arabia, where Mahomet lived, about the year 700, began dreadfully to waste the Roman empire. They conquered a great many countries belonging to the empire, and

* The following is an extract from Mahomet's character, drawn by the masterly hand of Mr. Gibbon; in which however it is but justice to remark, that this elegant historian appears too much inclined to admire any system inimical to christianity.

According to the tradition of his companions, Mahomet was distinguished by the beauty of his person. They applauded his commanding presence, his majestic aspect, his piercing eye, his gracious smile, his flowing beard, his countenance that painted every sensation of the soul, and his gestures that enforced each expression of the tongue. In the familiar offices of life he scrupulously adhered to the grave and ceremonious politeness of his country; his respectful attention to the rich and powerful was dignified by his condescension and affability to the poorest citizens of Mecca; the frankness of his manner concealed the artifice of his views; and the habits of courtesy were imputed to personal friendship or universal benevolence. His memory was capacious and retentive, his wit easy and social, his imagination sublime, his judgment clear, rapid, and decisive. He possessed the courage both of thought and action; and though his designs might gradually expand with his success, the first idea which he entertained of his divine mission bears the stamp of an original and superior genius. The son of Abdallah was educated in the bosom of the noblest race, in the use of the purest dialect of Arabia; and the fluency of his speech was corrected and enhanced by the practice of discreet and seasonable silence. With these powers of eloquence, Mahomet was an illiterate barbarian. His youth had never been instructed in the arts of reading and writing; the common ignorance exempted him from shame and reproach; but he was reduced to a narrow circle of existence, and deprived of those faithful mirrors, which reflect to our mind, the minds of sages and heroes. Yet the book of nature and of man was open to his view. From his earliest youth, Mahomet was addicted to religious contemplation; each year, during the month of Ramadin, he withdrew from the world, and from the arms of Cadijah. In the cave of Hera, three miles from Mecca, he consulted the spirit of fraud or enthusiasm, whose abode is not in the heavens, but in the mind of the prophet. The faith which, under the name of Islam, he preached to his family and nation, is compounded of an eternal truth and a necessary fiction, That there is only one God, and that Mahomet is the apostle of God.'

continued their victories for a long time. These are supposed to be meant by the locusts that we read of in the ninth chapter of Revelation.*

After these the Turks, who were originally another people, different from the Saracens, but were followers of Mahomet, conquered all the eastern empire. Their empire commenced about the year of Christ 1296, and about 1300 they began to invade Europe, took Constantinople, and so became masters of all the eastern empire in the year 1453. Thus all those cities, where the famous churches of Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, &c. were, now became subject to the Turks. They also took possession of Constantinople, which was named after Constantine the Great, and made by him the city of the Roman empire. These Turks are supposed to be prophesied of by the horsemen, in Rev. ix. 15.† And the remains of the Christians in those parts of the world, who are mostly of the Greek church, are in miserable slavery under these Turks, and treated with a great deal of barbarity and cruelty, and are become generally very ignorant and superstitious.

Thus I have shown what great works of Satan were wrought during this space of time in opposition to the kingdom of Christ.

(2) I come now to show how the church of Christ was upheld through this dark time.—And here,

[1] It is to be observed, that towards the former part of this space, some of the nations of christendom held out a long time before they complied with the corruptions and usurpations of the church of Rome. Though all the world wondered after the beast, yet all nations did not fall in at once. Many

* Saracens compared to locusts.] This they may be, (1) From their swarms, as the Saracens were almost innumerable. (2) Arabia their country, frequently abounds with locusts. (3) In the year 620, when Mahomet was training his disciples, an Arabian historian mentions the sun as being half eclipsed from October to June, which might be from the air being filled with locusts.

† Turks described as horsemen.] For this they were remarkable, and their standards were red, yellow, and blue. About this time also they invented great guns and gunpowder.

of the principal corruptions of the church of Rome were brought in with a great deal of struggle and opposition ; and particularly when the Pope gave out that he was universal bishop, many churches greatly opposed him in it, and it was a long time before they would yield to his exorbitant claims. And so, when the worship of images was first brought into the churches, there were many who greatly opposed it : the same also with respect to other corruptions of the church of Rome. Those people that dwelt near to the city of Rome complied sooner, but some that were more remote, were a long time before they could be induced to put their necks under the yoke. Ecclesiastical history gives an account that it was so especially with a great part of the churches in England, Scotland, and France, who retained the ancient purity of doctrine and worship much longer than many others, who were nearer the chief seat of antichrist.

[2] In every age of this dark time, there appeared particular persons in all parts of christendom, who bore a testimony against the corruptions and tyranny of the church of Rome. There is no one age of antichrist, even in the darkest times, but ecclesiastical historians mention many who manifested an abhorrence of the pope and his idolatrous ceremonies, and pleaded for the ancient purity of doctrine and worship. God was pleased to maintain an uninterrupted succession of witnesses through the whole time, in Germany, France, Britain, and other countries. Many of them were private persons, many ministers, and some magistrates and persons of distinction. And there were numbers in every age who were persecuted and put to death for this testimony.

[3] Besides particular persons dispersed here and there, there was a certain people, called the Waldenses, who lived separate from all the rest of the world, who kept themselves pure, and constantly bore a testimony against the church of Rome through all this dark time. The place where they dwelt

was the Vaudois, or the five valleys of Piedmont, a very mountainous country between Italy and France. The place where they lived was compassed about with those exceeding high mountains called the Alps, which were almost impassable. The passage over these mountainous desert countries was so difficult, that the valleys where this people dwelt were almost inaccessible. There they lived for many ages as it were alone, in a state of separation from all the world, having very little to do with any other people; and there they served God in the ancient purity of his worship, and never submitted to the church of Rome. This place, in this desert mountainous country, probably was the place especially alluded to in Rev. xii. 6, as the place prepared of God for the woman, that they should feed her there during the reign of antichrist.

Some of the popish writers themselves own, that this people never submitted to the church of Rome. One of them, when speaking of the Waldenses, says, The heresy of the Waldenses is the oldest heresy in the world. It is supposed that this people first betook themselves to this desert secret place among the mountains, to hide themselves from the severity of the heathen persecutions before the time of Constantine the Great; and thus the woman fled into the wilderness from the face of the serpent. 'To her were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place; where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.' The people being thus settled, their posterity continued there from age to age afterwards: and being as it were by natural walls, as well as by God's grace, separated from the rest of the world, they never partook of the overflowing corruption.

These especially were the virgins who were not defiled, but kept themselves pure for Christ alone; they followed the Lamb, their spiritual husband, whithersoever he went, even into this hideous wilderness. Rev. xiv. 4, 5. Their doctrine and their

worship by the accounts which remain of them, appear to be the same with the protestant doctrine and worship; and by the confession of popish writers, they were a people remarkable for the strictness of their lives, for charity, and other christian virtues. They lived in external poverty in this hideous country, and chose this rather than comply with the great corruptions of the rest of the world.*

Living in so secret a place, it was a long time before they seem to have been noticed by the Romanists; but at last falling under observation, they went out in mighty armies against them, and fell upon them with insatiable cruelty, putting to death men, women and children, with all imaginable tortures; and so continued persecuting them with but little intermission for several hundred years, till many of them were driven out of their old habitations in the vallies of Piedmont, and fled into all parts of Europe, carrying with them their doctrine, to which many were converted.† But their persecutors could not by all their cruelties extirpate the church of God; so fulfilling his word, ‘that the gates of hell should not prevail against it.’

[4] Towards the latter part of this dark time, several eminent divines openly appeared to defend the truth, and bear testimony against the corruptions of the church of Rome, and had many followers. The

* The ancient Waldenses carried up the date of their commencement as a body, to about the year 637, and it appears that the uninterrupted succession of the apostolic doctrine continued with them from the primitive times, quite down to the reformation. Soon after this period, they seem to have been melted down in the common mass of protestants.

† A popish writer has acknowledged that though whole armies were sent against them, yet their number increased daily, and they were rather slain, put to flight, spoiled everywhere of their goods and dignities, than convinced of their error or repented. They fled into Provence and the neighbouring Alps of the French territory; part of them withdrew into Calabria, and continued there a long while; part passed into Germany, and fixed their abode among the Bohemians, and in Poland and Livonia; others turning to the west, obtained refuge in Britain. It is also related that in these wars, when the papists took the city of Beziers, they put to the sword above 60,000 persons, among whom were many of their own profession; the pope’s legate crying out, ‘Kill them all, for the Lord knoweth them that are his.’

first and principal of these was a certain English divine, whose name was John Wickliff, who appeared about a hundred and forty years before the Reformation; and strenuously opposing the popish religion, taught the same doctrine that the Reformers afterwards did, and had many followers in England. He was hotly persecuted in his lifetime, yet died in peace; and after he was buried, his bones were dug up by his persecutors and burnt. His followers remained in considerable numbers in England till the Reformation, and were cruelly persecuted, and multitudes put to death for their religion.

Wickliff had many disciples and followers, not only in England, but in other parts of Europe, whither his books were carried; and particularly in Bohemia, among whom were two eminent divines, John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, the chief city of Bohemia. These strenuously opposed the church of Rome, and had many who adhered to them. They were both burnt by the papists for their doctrine;* and their followers in Bohemia were cruelly persecuted, but never extirpated till the Reformation.—Thus having gone through this dark time of the church, which is the second part of the space from Constantine the Great to the destruction of anti-christ, I come now,

5. To the third part, or that which begins with the Reformation, and reaches to the present time. Here I would notice (1) The Reformation itself—(2) The opposition that the devil has made to the Reformed church—(3) What success the gospel has

* A very remarkable expression is attributed to Huss, during his martyrdom. Addressing himself to the popish clergy then present, he said, 'Ye shall answer for this a hundred years hence, both to God and to me.' And some tell us that he added, 'You roast the Goose now, but a Swan shall arise whom you shall not be able to burn as you do the poor weak Goose.' Huss, in the Bohemia language, signifies a Goose, as Luther does a Swan; and just a hundred years after Luther rises up, and gives them a deeper wound than ever they had yet received, as it were, requiring the blood of Huss and Jerome of them; and we know that the Swan could never be taken, but died in her nest.

lately had in one place and another—(4) The present state of things in the church of Christ.

(1) The first thing to be noticed is the Reformation. This was begun about the year 1520; first in Saxony in Germany, by the preaching of Martin Luther, who being stirred in his spirit to see the horrid practices of the popish clergy, and having set himself diligently to inquire after truth by the study of the holy scriptures, and the writings of the ancient fathers of the church, openly and boldly decried the corruptions and usurpations of the Romish church in his preaching and writings, and had soon a great number that fell in with his doctrines. Among these was the Elector of Saxony, his sovereign prince. This greatly alarmed the church of Rome, which began to rally all its forces to oppose him and his doctrine, and fierce wars and persecutions were raised against it. Yet it went on by the labours of Luther and Melancthon in Germany, Zuinglius in Switzerland, and other eminent divines, who were contemporary with Luther, and fell in with him; particularly Calvin, who appeared somewhat after the beginning of the Reformation, but was one of the most eminent Reformers.

Many of the princes of Germany soon fell in with the reformed religion, as did several other states and kingdoms in Europe, as England, Scotland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, great part of France, Poland, Lithuania, Switzerland, and the Low Countries. So that it is thought, that heretofore about half christendom were of the protestant religion; though since that time the papists perhaps have gained ground, so that the protestants now have not so great a proportion.

Thus God began gloriously to revive his church and advance the kingdom of his Son, after such a dismal night as had been from the rise of anticrist to that time. There had been many endeavours used before by the witnesses of the truth for a reformation; but now, when God's appointed time was

come, his work was begun, and went on with a swift and wonderful progress. Antichrist, who had been rising higher and higher from his very first beginning till that time, was swiftly and suddenly brought down, and fell half way towards utter ruin, and never has been able to rise again to his former height. Mr. Lowman, who explains the five first vials in the sixteenth chapter of the Revelation, with greater probability perhaps than any who went before him, understands the fifth vial, which was poured out on the seat of the beast, of what came to pass in the reformation; as he had done the four preceding vials of certain great judgments God brought on the popish dominions before the reformation.* It is said in the tenth verse, that ‘the fifth angel poured out his vial on the seat of the beast;’ in the original it is, the throne of the beast; ‘and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.’ He poured out his vial upon the throne of the beast, i. e. on the authority and dominion of the pope. Thus the word throne is often used in scripture: 1 Kings i. 37. ‘As the Lord hath been with my lord the king, even so be he with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my Lord King David:’ that is, make his dominion and authority greater, and his kingdom more glorious.

But now in the reformation, the vials of God’s wrath were poured out on the throne of the beast. His throne was terribly shaken and diminished. The pope’s authority and dominion were greatly diminished, both as to their extent and degree. He lost as was said before, about half his dominions. And since the Reformation, the pope has lost great part of that authority, even in the popish dominions,

* Later interpreters have understood the pouring out of these vials as commencing with the French Revolution in 1792, and that their termination may be expected about the year 1822. Others extend the period to 1860.

which he had before. He is not regarded, and his power is dreaded in no measure as it used to be. The powers of Europe have learned not to put their necks under the pope's feet, as formerly they had done. So that he is as a lion that has lost his teeth, in comparison of what he was once. And when the pope and his clergy, enraged to see their authority so diminished at the reformation, laid their heads together, and joined their forces to destroy the reformation : their policy, which used to serve them so well, failed, and they found their kingdom full of darkness, so that they could do nothing, any more than the Egyptians, who rose not from their seats for three days. The Reformed church was defended as Lot and the angels were in Sodom, by smiting their enemies with blindness, that they could not find the door. God then fulfilled what he had formerly spoken by his servant Job : ' He set up on high those that be low, that those which mourn may be exalted to safety. He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprize. He taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and the council of the froward is carried headlong. They meet with darkness in the day time, and grope in the noon day as in the night. But he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty.' chap. v. These proud enemies of God's people being so disappointed, and finding themselves unable to uphold their own dominion and authority, it made them as it were to gnaw their tongues for pain and rage.

(2) I proceed therefore to show what opposition has been made to the success of Christ's purchase, in the Reformation, by Satan and his adherents ; observing as we go along, how far they have been baffled, and how far they have been successful.

[1] The first opposition that I shall take notice of, is that which was made by the clergy of the church of Rome uniting together in a general council. This was the famous council of Trent, which the pope called a little while after the Reformation. In that

council there met together six cardinals, thirty two archbishops, two hundred and twenty eight bishops, besides innumerable others of the Romish clergy. This council, in all their sittings, including the times of intermission between, was held for eighteen years together. Their main business all this while was to concert measures for establishing the church of Rome against the Reformers, and for destroying the Reformation ; but they were not able to perform their enterprise. The Reformed church, notwithstanding that council, still remains. So that the council of the froward is carried headlong, their kingdom is full of darkness, and they weary themselves in vain.

Thus the church of Rome, instead of repenting of their deeds, when such clear light was held forth to them by Luther and other Reformers, does by general agreement in council persist in their vile corruptions and wickedness, and obstinate opposition to the kingdom of Christ. The doctrines and practices of the church of Rome, which were chiefly condemned by the Reformed, were confirmed by the decrees of this council ; and the corruptions, in many respects, were carried higher than ever before ; and they uttered blasphemous reproaches and curses against the Reformed religion, and all the Reformed church was excommunicated and anathematized by them ; and so according to the prophecy, ' they blasphemed God.' Thus God hardened their hearts, intending to destroy them.

[2] The Papists have often endeavoured to overthrow the Reformation by secret plots and conspiracies. So there were many plots against the life of Luther. The papists were engaged in contriving to dispatch him, and to put him out of the way ; and being a very bold man, he often very much exposed himself in the cause of Christ ; but yet they were wonderfully prevented from hurting him, and he at last died in his bed in peace. There have also been from time to time innumerable schemes secretly laid for the overthrow of the Protestant religion ; among which, that which seems to be most consi-

derable, and which appeared the most likely to have taken effect, was that in the time of king James ii. There was at that time a strong conspiracy between the king of England and Lewis xiv. of France, who were both papists, to extirpate the northern heresy, as they called the protestant religion, not only out of England, but out of all Europe; and had laid their schemes so, that they seemed to be almost sure of their purpose. They looked upon it, that if the Reformed religion were suppressed in the British realms, and in the Netherlands, which were the strongest part, and the chief defence of the protestant interest, they should have easy work with the rest. And just as their matters seemed to be come to a head, and their enterprise ripe for execution, God in his providence suddenly dashed all these schemes in pieces by the Revolution, at the coming in of King William and Queen Mary. By this means all their designs were at an end; and the protestant interest was more strongly established, by the crown of England's being settled in the protestant house of Hanover; and a papist, by the constitution of the nation, for ever rendered incapable of wearing the crown of England. Thus they groped in darkness at noon day as in the night, and their hands could not perform their enterprise; their kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain.

After this there was a deep design laid to bring the same thing to pass in the latter end of Queen Anne's reign, by the bringing in of the popish Pretender; which was no less suddenly and totally baffled by divine providence, as the plots against the Reformation, by bringing in the Pretender, have been from time to time.

[3] The Reformation has often been opposed by open wars and invasions. So in the beginning of the Reformation, the emperor of Germany, to suppress the Reformation, declared war with the Duke of Saxony, and the principal men who favoured and received Luther's doctrine. But they could not ob-

tain their end, nor suppress the Reformation. For the same purpose the king of Spain maintained a long war with Holland and the Low Countries in the seventeenth century. But those cruel wars issued greatly to the disadvantage of the Romish church, as they occasioned the setting up of one of the most powerful protestant states in Europe, which, next to Great Britain, are the chief barrier of the protestant religion. The design also of the Spanish invasion of England in Queen Elizabeth's time, was to suppress and root out the reformed religion; and therefore they brought in their fleet all manner of instruments of cruelty wherewith to torture the protestants who would not renounce their religion. But their design was totally baffled, and their mighty fleet in a great measure ruined.*

[4] Satan has opposed the Reformation with cruel persecutions. The persecutions with which the protestants in one kingdom and another have been tormented by the church of Rome, have been in many respects beyond any that were before; so that antichrist has proved the greatest and most cruel enemy the church of Christ ever had, agreeable to the description given of the church of Rome. Rev. xvii. 6, 'And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.' Also chap. xviii. 24 'And in

* The defeat of the Spanish Armada was so much the work of Providence, that the Spanish admiral blasphemously swore, that he feared Jesus Christ was turned Lutheran; and even the king of Spain himself, hearing of this strange defeat of his fleet, saw so evidently the finger of God in this disappointment, that he is reported to have said, He did not send his fleet to fight against God, but against men.

Don Pedro, one of the Spanish captains taken by Sir F. Drake, being examined before the lords of the privy council what was their design of invading us, replied, 'To subdue the nation and root it out.' And what meant you, said the lords, to do with the Catholics? 'To send them, good men, said he, directly to heaven, and all you heretics to hell.' For what end were your whips of cord and wire? 'To whip you heretics to death.' What would you have done with the young children? 'Those above seven years old should have gone the way their fathers went; the rest should have lived in perpetual bondage, branded in the forehead with the letter L for Lutherans.'

The instruments of torture above alluded to, as thumbscrews, whips, &c. are still shewn among other curiosities in the Tower of London

her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all them that were slain upon the earth.'

The heathen persecutions had been very dreadful ; but now persecution by the church of Rome was improved, and studied, and cultivated, as an art or science. Such methods of tormenting were found out that were beyond the invention of former ages. And that persecution might be managed more effectually, there were certain societies established in various parts of the popish dominions, whose business it should be to study, improve, and practise persecution in its highest perfection, which are called courts of Inquisition.* A perusal of the histories of the Romish persecution, and their courts of inquisition, will give that idea which a few words cannot express.

When the Reformation commenced, the beast with seven heads and ten horns began to rage in a dread-

* These infernal tribunals were first erected in the twelfth century by the infamous Father Dominic, under the patronage of Pope Innocent iii. in order more completely to extirpate the Waldenses, and other pretended heretics. It is difficult to conceive, that if God had delivered the world entirely into the devil's hands (as Satan once pretended) that his ingenuity and malice could have invented any thing more detestable and shocking. In fact, there is scarcely a method that could delay or pervert justice, but they have adopted it in their forms ; nor does there seem a possible method of torture but they have invented and repeatedly exercised. The reader whose nerves can bear such reiterated scenes of cruelty, may read Baker's Hist. of the Inquisition—the History of the Inquis. at Goa, written by a Papist—and similar works. But to show how far it is possible for human nature to go, let him read the following extract from a sermon preached at Evora, on occasion of one of the most horrid scenes the sun ever beheld, an *auto de fe*, when they burn or rather roast heretics (as they call them) alive, from a principle of religion. ' Beloved Portuguese,' said the inhuman wretch, ' let us return thanks to heaven, for his great goodness in giving us this holy tribunal, (the Inquisition.) Had it not been for this, our kingdom would have become a tree without flowers or fruit, fit only to be committed to the flames. What progress has heresy made for want of an inquisition in England, France, Germany, and the Netherlands ! It is evident, had it not been for so great a blessing, our country would have been like to those above mentioned.' If it be possible to add any thing more shocking to this impious harangue, it is, that one of our own judges, Sir J. Hovel, recorder of London, wished for the like institution here in England. ' Till now,' said he, on the trial of Penn and Mead, two Quakers, ' I never understood the prudence and policy of the Spaniards in suffering the Inquisition among them. And certainly it will never be well with us, till something like the Spanish inquisition be in England.'

ful manner. After the Reformation, the church of Rome renewed its persecution of the poor Waldenses, and great multitudes of them were cruelly tortured and put to death. Soon after the Reformation, there were also terrible persecutions in various parts of Germany, especially in Bohemia, which lasted for thirty years together; in which so much blood was shed for the sake of religion, that a certain writer compares it to the plenty of waters of the great rivers of Germany. The countries of Poland, Lithuania, and Hungary, were in like manner deluged with protestant blood.*

By means of these and other cruel persecutions, the protestant religion was in a great measure suppressed in Bohemia, and the Palatinate, and Hungary, which before were protestant countries. Thus was fulfilled what was foretold of the little horn, Dan. vii. 20, 21. 'Of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell, even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows, I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them.' And what was foretold of the beast having seven heads and ten horns, Rev. xiii. 7. 'And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.'

Also Holland and the other Low Countries were for many years a scene of nothing but the most affecting and amazing cruelties, being deluged with the blood of protestants, under the merciless hands of the Spaniards, to whom they were then in subjection. But in this persecution, the devil in a great measure failed of his purpose; as it issued in a great part of the Netherlands casting off the Spanish yoke,

* Not to mention other outrageous slaughters and barbarities, the crusades against the Waldenses and Albigenses, the murders committed by the Duke of Alva in the Netherlands, the massacres in France and Ireland will probably amount to above ten times the number of all the christians slain in all the ten persecutions of the Roman emperors put together.

and setting up a wealthy and powerful protestant state, to the great defence of the protestant cause ever since.

France also is another country which, since the Reformation, in some respects perhaps more than any other, has been a scene of dreadful cruelties suffered by the protestants there. After many cruelties had been exercised towards the protestants in that kingdom, a persecution of them was commenced in the year 1571, in the reign of Charles ix. king of France. It began with a cruel massacre, wherein seventy thousand protestants were slain in a few days time, as the king boasted : and in all this persecution, he slew, as is supposed, three hundred thousand martyrs. It is also reckoned that about this time, within thirty years there were martyred in this kingdom, for the protestant religion, 39 princes, 148 counts, 234 barons, 147, 518 gentlemen, and 760,000 of the common people.*

But all these persecutions were, for exquisite cruelty, far exceeded by those which followed in the reign of Lewis xiv., which indeed are supposed to exceed all others that ever have been ; and being long continued, by reason of the long reign of that king, almost wholly extirpated the protestant religion out of that kingdom, where had been before a multitude of famous protestant churches all over the country.† Thus it was given to the beast to make war with the saints, and to overcome them.

* The Parisian massacre was aggravated with several circumstances of wantonness and treachery ; but we hope that the above numbers are exaggerated. Thuanus, their own historian, reckons 30,000 lives destroyed in this slaughter ; but protestant authors seem to have reason for supposing them not less than 100,000 in the whole. But the most horrid circumstance in the history is, that when the news of this event reached Rome, Pope Gregory xiii. instituted the most solemn rejoicings, giving thanks to Almighty God for this glorious victory ! An instance that has no parallel, even in hell

† The persecution under Lewis xiv. followed the revocation of the edict of Nantes, in 1685. The following extract is taken from a French work of reputation.

* The soldiers and dragoons went into the protestants houses, where they marred and defaced their household stuff, broke their looking-glasses, and other utensils and ornaments ; let their wine run about

There was also a terrible persecution in England in Queen Mary's time, wherein great numbers in all

their cellars, and threw about their corn, and spoiled it. And as to those things which they could not destroy in this manner, such as furniture of beds, linen, wearing apparel, plate, &c. they carried them to the market place, and sold them to the Jesuits, and other Roman catholics. By these means the protestants in Montaubon alone were, in four or five days, stripped of above a million of money. But this was not the worst.

'They turned the dining-rooms of gentlemen into stables for their horses, and treated the owners of the houses where they quartered with the greatest indignity and cruelty, lashing them about from one to another, day and night, without intermission, not suffering them to eat or drink. When they began to sink under the fatigue and pains they had undergone, they laid them on a bed, and when they thought them somewhat recovered, made them rise, and repeated the same tortures. When they saw the blood and sweat run down their faces and other parts of their bodies, they sluiced them with water; and putting over their heads kettle-drums, turned upside down, they made a continual din upon them till these unhappy creatures lost their senses. When one party of these tormentors were weary, they were relieved by another, who practised the same cruelties with fresh vigour.

'At a town near Montanbon, they hung up a protestant citizen by his arm-pits, and tormented him a whole night by pinching and tearing off his flesh with pincers. They made a great fire round a boy about twelve years old, who, with hands and eyes lifted up to heaven, cried out, 'My God, help me!' And when they found the youth resolved to die rather than renounce his religion, they snatched him from the fire just as he was on the point of being burnt.

'In several places the soldiers applied red hot irons to the hands and feet of men, and the breasts of women. At Nantes they hung up several women and maids by their feet, and others by their arm pits, and thus exposed them to public view stark naked. They bound mothers that gave suck to posts, and let their sucking infants lie languishing in their sight for several days and nights, crying, mourning, and gasping for life. Some they bound before a great fire, and being half roasted, let them go; a punishment worse than death. Amidst a thousand hideous cries, and a thousand blasphemies, they hung up men and women by the hair; and some by their feet, on hooks in chimneys, and smoked them with whisks of wet hay till they were suffocated. They tied some under the arms with ropes, and plunged them again and again into wells; they bound others like criminals, put them to the torture, and with a funnel filled them with wine, till the fumes of it took away their reason, when they made them say they consented to be catholics. They stripped them naked, and after a thousand indignities, stuck them with pins and needles from head to foot. They cut and slashed them with knives; and sometimes with red hot pincers took hold of them by the nose, and other parts of the body, and dragged them about the rooms till they made them promise to be catholics, or till the cries of these miserable victims, calling upon God for help, forced them to let them go. They beat them with staves, and thus bruised, and with broken bones, dragged them to church, where their forced presence was taken for an abjuration. In some places they tied fathers and husbands to their bed-posts, and before their eyes ravished their wives and daughters with impunity. They blew up men and women with bellows till they burst them. If any to

parts of the kingdom were burnt alive.* And after this, though the Protestant religion has been for the most part established by law in England, yet there have been very severe persecutions by the high churchmen, who symbolize in many things with the papists. Such a persecution was that which occasioned our forefathers to flee from their native country, and to come and settle in America, which was then a hideous wilderness ; and these persecutions were continued with little intermission till King William came to the throne.†

escape these barbarities endeavoured to save themselves by flight, they pursued them into the fields and woods, where they shot at them like wild beasts, and prohibited them from departing the kingdom (a cruelty never practised by Nero or Dioclesian) upon pain of confiscation of effects, the galleys, the lash, and perpetual imprisonment. The prisons of the seaport towns were crammed with men, women, and children, who endeavoured to save themselves by flight from this dreadful persecution. With these scenes of desolation and horror, the popish clergy feasted their eyes, and made only a matter of laughter and sport of them.' [SECKEND'S Hist. p. 116.

* See Fox's Martyrs, Vol. iii.

† Persecutions of the High Churehmen.] Luther used a vulgar saying, ' that every man is born with a pope in his belly ;' meaning that a spirit of tyranny is natural to the present depraved state of man. Nor will the mere profession of any religion, however excellent and benign, remedy this propensity, unless men enter into the spirit of it. We need not wonder therefore at animosities and even persecutions among nominal professors, who often assume christianity only as a cloke for their vicious tempers and conduct. The persecutions and oppressions in the times of the Stuarts seem to have arisen solely from a lust of power and impatience of contradiction. Even that mistaken zeal for God and religion which sometimes kindled the flames of persecution, seems to have had but little share in causing these, since the bitterest enemies of the puritans did not charge them with essential errors of either faith or manners. Absolute monarchy and arbitrary power were the grand objects of Laud and his furious associates, and it is to be feared that they would not have thought the destruction of half their master's subjects too dear a purchase for the power of completely tyrannizing over the rest. It would be foreign to the design of these notes to enter into the particulars of these enormities ; those who can bear such relations, may find abundance of them in Baxter's History of his Life and Times, Neal's History of the Puritans, and Palmer's edition of the Nonconformists Memorial, or Memoirs of the Nonconformist Ministers ; three thousand of whom were expelled on the same fatal day (St. Bartholomew's) on which the Parisian massacre began. But, unhappily, persecution has not been confined to such men : every sect, and some of the best men in each, have engaged in the diabolical business. Instances of this kind appeared in the primitive church, and the same may be observed early in the reformation. With what bitterness the Lutherans, Zuinglians, and Calvinists, and other parts of the reformers, abused, imprisoned, and banished each

Scotland has also been the scene, for many years together, of cruelties and blood by the hands of high churchmen, such as came very little short of the popish persecution in Queen Mary's days, and in many things much exceeded it, which continued till they were delivered by King William.

Ireland also has been as it were overwhelmed with protestant blood. In the days of King Charles i. of England, above a hundred thousand protestants were cruelly murdered in that kingdom in a few days; the papists, by a secret agreement, rising all over the kingdom at an appointed time, intending to kill every protestant in the kingdom at once.*

Besides these, there have been very cruel persecutions in Italy, and Spain, and other places, which I shall not stand to relate.†

Other, is too well attested by ecclesiastical historians of the 10th century. Not to mention the blood of sectaries unjustly shed both at home and abroad. Not only did the episcopalians in England persecute the dissenters; but in Scotland, and during the commonwealth in England, these persecuted the episcopalians. And what is perhaps more extraordinary, even in New-England, where the first colonists fled from the iron hand of oppression at home, they persecuted the quakers and others who dissented from their establishment. How then shall we account for these enormities, but upon the principle first mentioned, that it proceeds from the general depravity of human nature, which, though in a degree rectified and subdued in good men, is not eradicated, but often discovers itself in the tempers and actions of the best.

* It appears that the Irish protestants had been marked out for destruction in Queen Mary's reign, but providence delivered them in the following remarkable manner. Dr. Cole being sent with a commission for that purpose, boasted of it by the way, and a protestant at Chester, where he stopped, found means to steal it. When the doctor came to Ireland, and was about to produce his commission to the proper persons, on opening the box which had contained it, to his great mortification he only found a pack of cards, with the knave of clubs uppermost! He returned to obtain a new commission, but the queen died before it could be procured.

† Besides the protestant blood shed in these persecutions, popery has to answer for the lives of millions of Jews, Mahometans, and barbarians. When the Moors conquered Spain in the eighth century, they allowed the Christians the free exercise of their religion. But in the fifteenth century, when the tables were turned, and Ferdinand subdued the descendants of the above Moors, many hundred thousands of them were forced to be baptized or burnt, massacred or banished, and their children sold for slaves; besides an innumerable multitude of Jews who shared the same cruelties; chiefly by means of the infernal inquisition. A worse slaughter if possible was made among the natives of Spanish America, where fifteen millions are said to have been sacrificed to the genius of popery in the course of about forty

Thus did the devil, and his great minister anti-christ, rage with violence and cruelty against the church of Christ. Thus did the whore of Babylon make herself drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus ; and thus, by these persecutions, the protestant church has been much diminished. Yet have they not been able to prevail ; but still the church is upheld, and Christ fulfils his promise, that ‘ the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.’

[5] The last kind of opposition that Satan has made to the Reformation is by corrupt opinions, which he has propagated in the world.—The first opposition of this kind was by the Baptists, which began about four or five years after the Reformation. This sect, as it first appeared in Germany, were vastly more extravagant than the present Baptists are in England.* They held a great many corrupt opinions. One was, that there ought to be no civil authority, and so that it was lawful to rebel against civil authority. On this principle they refused to submit to magistrates, or any human laws, and gathered together in vast armies to defend themselves ; and having put all Germany into an uproar, they kept it so for some time.

The next opposition of this kind to the Reformation was that which was made by Enthusiasts, who falsely pretend to be inspired by the Holy Ghost as the prophets were. These appeared in Germany about ten years after Luther began the Reformation, and many of them were exceeding wild and extravagant. The followers of these are the Quakers in England, and other parts of the British dominions.

The next were the Socinians, who had their beginning in Poland, by the teaching of Lælius and

years. Well therefore might the inspired apostle say, that at Mystic Babylon's destruction, ‘ In her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.’ Rev. xviii. 24.

* It is but justice to observe that the present baptists or antipædo-baptists, as they are now called, differ in nothing from other dissenters, but in the article of baptism, which they administer by immersion and to adults only. But the baptists of the sixteenth century were what our author represents them.

Faustus Socinus. They held that Christ was a mere man, and denied his satisfaction, and many of the fundamental doctrines of the christian religion. Their heresy has since been greatly propagated among Protestants in Poland, Germany, Holland, England and other places.

After these arose the Arminians. They first appeared in Holland about a hundred and thirty years ago. They are so called from a Dutchman, whose name was Jacob Van Harmin, in Latin, Jacobus Arminius. This Arminius was first a minister at Amsterdam, and then a professor of divinity in the university of Leyden. He had many followers in Holland. There was in consequence a synod of all the Reformed churches called together, who met at Dort in Helland.* The Synod of Dort condemned them; but still they spread and prevailed. They began to prevail in England in the reign of Charles i. especially in the church of England. The English divines before that time were almost universally Calvinists; but since then Arminianism has gradually more and more prevailed, both in the establishment and among the Dissenters, and has spread greatly in New England.

Since this, Arianism has been revived. I have already observed that Arianism, a little after Constantine's time, almost swallowed up the christian world, like a flood out of the mouth of the dragon, which threatened to swallow up the woman. And of late years, this heresy also has been revived in

* This famous assembly met in 1618. Besides a number of Dutch divines, and several from other protestant countries, England sent four, viz. Bps. Carlton, Hall, and Davenant, and Dr. Ward; and Scotland one, Dr. Balconquel. The three principal Arminians were Episcopius Corvinus, and Dwinglon. After much altercation, (as is generally the case) without any approach to agreement, the assembly confirmed the famous five points, viz. Election, limited Redemption, Original Sin, the invincibility of Grace, and final Perseverance. And the Arminian remonstrants being the weaker party, were deposed from their ministry.

We take the liberty of adding, that our author's excellent treatises on Free will, Original Sin, &c. have perhaps done more than twenty Synods could have done to refute these errors.

England, and greatly prevails there, both in the Church and among Dissenters.

Another thing which has of late exceedingly prevailed among protestants, and especially in England is Deism. The Deists wholly cast off the christian religion, and are professed infidels. They are not like those heretics, the Arians, Socinians and others, who own the scriptures to be the word of God, and the christian religion to be true, but only deny certain doctrines of it, for they deny the whole christian religion. They own indeed the being of God; but deny that Christ was the Son of God, and say he was an impostor, as they do of all the prophets and apostles. They deny the bible, all revealed religion, and believe that God has given mankind no other light to walk by but their own reason.—Thus much concerning the opposition that Satan has made against the Reformation.

(3) I proceed now to show what success the gospel has had in these later times of the Reformed church. This success may be reduced to three heads—the reformation in doctrine and worship in countries called christian—the propagation of the gospel among the heathen—the revival of religion in the power and practice of it.

[1] As to reformation in Doctrine, the most considerable success of the gospel of this kind lately, has been in the empire of Muscovy, which is a country of vast extent. The Muscovites, as many of them as call themselves christians, professed to be of the Greek church; but were barbarously ignorant, and very superstitious, till of late years. Their late emperor Peter the Great, who reigned till within these twenty years, set himself to reform the people of his dominions, and took great pains to bring them out of their darkness, and to have them instructed in religion. To that end he set up schools of learning, ordered the bible to be printed in their own language, and made a law that every family should keep the holy scriptures in their houses, and that no person should be allowed to marry till they

were able to read them. He also reformed his churches of many of their superstitions, whereby the religion professed and practised in Muscovy became much nearer to that of the protestants than formerly it used to be. This emperor gave great encouragement to the exercise of the protestant religion in his dominions ; and since that, Muscovy is become a land of light in comparison of what it was before.*

[2] As to the second kind of success which the gospel has lately had, in its propagation among the Heathen, I would take notice of three instances.

The propagation of the gospel among the heathen here in America. This continent on which we live, which forms a great part of the world, and together with its neighbouring seas adjoining, takes up one side of the globe, was wholly unknown to all christian nations till these latter times, though it was very full of people. Here therefore the devil had the inhabitants as it were secure to himself, out of the reach of the light of the gospel, and so out of the way of molestation in his dominion over them. Here the many nations of Indians worshipped him as God from age to age, while the gospel was confined to the opposite side of the globe. It is a supposition which, if I remember right, I have some where met with, that the occasion of the first peopling of America was this, that the devil being alarmed and surprised by the wonderful success of the gospel during the first three hundred years after Christ, and by the downfall of the heathen empire in the time of Constantine ; and fearing that his kingdom would be utterly overthrown throughout the world, led away a people from the other continent into America, that

* Since the period above referred to, the Russians have enjoyed superior religious advantages, under the emperor Alexander. Religion has considerably revived in the Greek church, and amongst a numerous class of Dissenters, who enjoy the favourable protection of the emperor. Bible societies have been established in most of the large cities, a system of national education has been adopted, and the scriptures have obtained a free circulation throughout the empire.

they might be quite out of the reach of the gospel, that there he might quietly possess them, and reign over them as their god. And it is said, that some of the Indians, when the Europeans first came into America, had a tradition among them, that their god first led them into this continent, and went before them in an ark.*

Whether this was so or not, it is certain that the devil did quietly enjoy his dominion over the poor Indians for many ages. But in later times God has sent the gospel into these parts of the world, and now the Christian church is set up among us in New England, and in other parts of America, where before had been nothing but the grossest heathenish darkness. Great part of America is now full of bibles, and has at least the form of the worship of the true God, where the name of Christ had not been heard of for many ages, if at all. And though there has been but a small propagation of the gospel among the heathen here, in comparison of what could be wished, yet there has been some appearances worthy of our notice. There was something remarkable in the first times of New England ; and

* It appears much more probable from a similarity of manners and even of language, not to mention other circumstances, that a part of America was peopled long before this time by some Phenicians ; and was not totally unknown to the ancient Greeks. This supposition will perfectly agree with the tradition mentioned by our author, since it appears that other nations had an imitation of the sacred ark of the Hebrews ; as the South Americans, and some of the South Sea islanders. It appears also more consistent with the divine glory to refer this event to the providence of God, than to the agency of the devil. It was unquestionably the work of heaven to scatter the inhabitants of the earth after the confusion of Babel, in order to the peopling of our hemisphere, and it is inconceivable why the peopling of the other should be referred to so opposite a cause. It is granted however that America might owe a great part of its inhabitants to these countries of Asia, as Tartary, Siberia, and Kamschatka, which approach it nearest, and as some suppose, may possibly have once joined the opposite continent. And perhaps some might emigrate from China, and even from Wales. Whether, however, the first inhabitants of America fled thither from the hand of tyranny—emigrated from a principle of commerce—or were driven there by unruly elements, there seems no reason for ascribing an event of such importance to diabolical agency or contrivance. *Univer. Hist.* vol. xx.

even of late in this and several other parts of America, many Indians have shown an inclination to be instructed in the christian religion.*

However small the propagation of the gospel among the heathen in America has hitherto been, yet we may consider the discovery of so great a part of the world, and bringing the gospel into it, as one thing by which divine providence is preparing the way for the future glorious times of the church; when Satan's kingdom shall be overthrown, not only throughout the Roman empire, but throughout the whole habitable globe, on every side, and on all its continents. When those times come, then doubtless the gospel, which is already brought over into America, shall have glorious success, and all the inhabitants of this new discovered world shall become subjects of the kingdom of Christ, as well as the other parts of the earth: and in all probability providence has so ordered it, that the mariner's compass, which is an invention of later times,† (whereby men are enabled to sail over the widest ocean, when before they durst not venture far from land) should prove a preparation for what God intends to bring to pass in the glorious times of the church, viz. the sending forth the gospel wherever any of the children of men dwell, how far off soever, and however separated by wide oceans from those parts of the world which are already christianized.

There has of late years also been a very considerable propagation of the gospel in the dominions of Muscovy. I have already observed the reformation effected in the Greek church, but I now speak of the heathen. Great part of the vast dominions of the emperor of Russia are grossly heathen. The greater part of Tartary, a heathen country, has been brought under the Russian government; and of late

* One of the most eminent and successful missionaries among the American Indians was Mr. David Brainerd, whose life President Edwards published. A new and improved edition of this interesting work is sold by Burton and Co., Leadenhall Street, London, price 12s. boards.

† About the year 1302.

great numbers of those heathens have embraced the christian religion.

There has lately been likewise a very considerable propagatoin of the christian religion among the heathen in the East Indies; particularly at Malabar, many have been brought over to the christian and protestant religion, chiefly by the labours of missionaries sent thither by the king of Denmark; who have set up schools among them, and a printing press to print bibles and other books for their instruction, in their own language, with great success.*

[3] The next kind of success attending the gospel, which I shall take notice of, is the late revivals of the power and practice of true religion. And here I shall notice only two instances.

First, There has been not long since a remarkable revival of the power and practice of religion in Saxony, through the endeavours of Professor Frank, of the divinity at Hall in Saxony, who being a person of eminent charity, the great work that God wrought by him, commenced with his setting on foot a charitable design. It began only with his placing an alms box at his study door, into which some poor mites were thrown, whereby books were bought for the instruction of the poor. And God was pleased so wonderfully to smile on his design, and so to pour out a spirit of charity on people there on that occasion, that with their charity he was enabled in a little time to erect public schools for the instruction of poor children, and an orphan house for the supply and instruction of the poor; so that at last near five hundred children were maintained and instructed in learning and piety by the charity of others, and the

* In addition to the labours of the Danish missionaries, at the period above referred to, the Baptist Missionary Society have since formed more than thirty missionary stations in Bengal, and translated and circulated the scripture in as many of the native languages. These efforts have also been followed by a succession of missionaries, from the Church Missionary Society, the London Missionary Society, and the Wesleyan Society, who have all laboured in the same vineyard with considerable success.

number increased more and more for many years. This was accompanied with a wonderful reformation and revival of religion, and a spirit of piety, in the city and university of Hall; and thus it continued. This also had great influence in many other places in Germany.

Another thing, which it would be ungrateful not to notice, is that remarkable outpouring of the Spirit of God which has been of late in this part of New England, of which we, in this town, have had so large a share. But it is needless for me particularly to describe what you have so lately been eye witnesses to, and I hope multitudes of you are sensible of the benefit.*---Thus I have mentioned the more

* President Edwards published a narrative of this extraordinary event, from which the following is an extract—In the latter end of the year 1733, the young people of Northampton in New England showed a peculiar readiness in receiving instruction. Soon after this, a number of persons appeared to be converted at a small village about three miles from the town: in the following year some remarkable deaths awakened the attention of many to religious concerns. About the close of this year several persons were suddenly, and it appears, truly converted, particularly a young woman who had been remarkably gay; the news of which flew like lightning, and produced a general and almost instantaneous alarm. There was scarcely a single person in the town either old or young, that was left unconcerned about the great things of the eternal world. From day to day, for many months together, might be seen evident instances of sinners being brought out of darkness into marvellous light. This soon made a glorious alteration in the town; so that in the spring and summer following, 1735, the town seemed to be full of the presence of God. It was a time of joy in families on account of salvation being brought to them; parents rejoicing over their children as new-born, and husbands over their wives, and wives over their husbands. The doings of God were then seen in his sanctuary, the Lord's day was a delight, and his tabernacles were amiable. Our public assemblies were then beautiful, the congregation was alive in God's service, every one earnestly intent on public worship, every hearer eager to drink in the words of the minister as they came from his mouth. The assembly in general were, from time to time, in tears while the word was preached; some weeping with sorrow and distress, others with joy and love, others with pity and concern for the souls of their neighbours. In all companies, on whatever occasion persons met together, Christ was to be heard of, and seen in the midst of them; even at weddings, which formerly were merely occasions of mirth and jollity, there was now no discourse of any thing but the things of religion, and no appearance of any but spiritual mirth.

Those amongst us, that had been formerly converted, were greatly enlivened and renewed with fresh and extraordinary incomes of the Spirit of God. Many that before had laboured under difficulties about their own state, now had their doubts removed by more satis-

remarkable instances of the success which the gospel has lately had in the world.

(4) I proceed now to the last thing proposed, relating to the success of Christ's redemption during this space, viz. what the state of things is now in the world with regard to the church of Christ, and the

fyng experience, and more clear discoveries of God's love. And there were many instances of persons that came from abroad, on visits, or on business, that had not been long here before, to all appearance they were savingly wrought upon, and partook of that shower of divine blessing that God rained down here, and went home rejoicing; till at length the same work began evidently to appear and prevail in several other towns in the country.

I am far from pretending (continues our author) to be able to determine how many have lately been the subjects of such mercy; but if I may be allowed to declare any thing that appears to me probable in a thing of this nature, I hope that more than three hundred souls were savingly brought home to Christ in this town, in the space of half a year, and about the same number of males as females. I hope also that by far the greater part of persons in this town, above 16 years of age, are such as have the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ; and so by what I have heard, I suppose it is in some other places, particularly at Sunderland and South Hadley. I suppose there were upwards of fifty persons in this town above forty years of age; and more than twenty of them above fifty, and about ten of them above sixty, and two of them above seventy years of years. Nearly thirty were to appearance so wrought upon between ten and fourteen years of age, and two between nine and ten, and one of about four years of age.

The work of God's Spirit seemed to be at it greatest height in this town, in the former part of the spring; at which time the conversion of souls was carried on amongst us in so wonderful a manner, that so far as I can judge from the particular acquaintance I have had with souls in this work, it appears to me probable to have been at the rate, at least, of four persons in a day, or nearly thirty in a week, taking one with another, for five or six weeks together. When God in so remarkable a manner took the work into his own hands, there was as much done in a day or two, as at ordinary times, with all endeavours that men can use, and with such a blessing as we commonly have, is done in a year.

[Narrative, p. 14.—29.

While we are considering the wonderful works of God in America, we cannot persuade ourselves to omit the remarkable success which attended the ministry of the excellent Mr. Whitefield in different parts of America, in the years 1738, 1740, and 1770, where incredible numbers attended his ministry, and much good was done. It may be needless to mention, that in Georgia he founded an orphan house on a plan similar to that of Professor Franck, above mentioned. Also in the year 1761 the gospel was remarkably succeeded in Long Island. At East Hampton only, where a Mr. Bull was minister, nearly two hundred appeared to be truly converted, with circumstances nearly similar to the great work mentioned by President Edwards. At Huntington, Smith Town, Bridge Hampton, and Southhold also, the like work was carried on to the glory of divine grace, and the salvation of multitudes

success of Christ's purchase. This I would do by showing how things now are, compared with the first times of the Reformation ; observing wherein the state of things is changed for the worse, and how it is altered for the better.

[1] I would show wherein the state of things is altered from what it was in the beginning of the Reformation, for the worse ; and it is so especially in these three respects.

First, the Reformed church is much diminished. The reformation formerly, as was observed before, was supposed to take place through one half of christendom, excepting the Greek church ; but now the Protestant church is much diminished. Heretofore there have been many famous protestant churches in different parts of France who used to meet together in synods, and maintain a regular discipline ; and great part of that kingdom were protestants ; the protestant church of France was a great part of the glory of the Reformation. But now it is far otherwise : this church is all broken to pieces and scattered. The protestant religion is almost wholly rooted out of that kingdom by the cruel persecutions which have taken place, and there are now but very few protestant assemblies in all that kingdom. The protestant interest is also greatly diminished in Germany. There were several sovereign princes formerly who were protestants, whose successors are now papists ; particularly, the Elector Palatine, and the Elector of Saxony. The kingdom of Bohemia was formerly a protestant kingdom, but is now in the hands of the papists. Hungary was also formerly a protestant country ; but the protestants there have been greatly reduced, and indeed subdued by persecution. And the protestant interest has no way remarkably gained ground of late on the church of Rome.

Another thing wherein the state of things is altered for the worse, from what was in the former times of the Reformation, is the prevalence of licentious principles and opinions. There is not now that spirit

of orthodoxy as formerly ; there is very little appearance of zeal for the mysterious and spiritual doctrines of christianity ; and they never were so ridiculed, and had in contempt, as they are in the present age, and especially in England, the principal kingdom of the Reformation. In this kingdom, those principles on which the power of godliness depends, are in a great measure exploded, and Arianism, Socinianism, Arminianism, and Deism, prevail and carry almost all before them.* History gives no account of any age wherein there was so great an apostasy of those who had been brought up under the light of the gospel ; never was there such a rejection of all revealed religion : never in any age was there so much scoffing at and ridiculing the gospel of Christ, by those who have been brought up under gospel-light, as at this day.

Another thing in which things are altered for the worse is, that there is much less of the prevalency of the power of godliness, than there was at the beginning of the Reformation. A glorious outpouring of the Spirit of God accompanied the first reformation, not only to convert multitudes in so short a time from popery to the true religion, but to turn many to God and true godliness. Religion gloriously flourished in one country and another, as most remarkably appeared in those times of terrible persecution, which have already been spoken of. But now there is a great decay of vital piety, which is contemptuously called enthusiasm and fanaticism. Those who are truly religious, are commonly looked

* Since the time that the above was written, there has happily been a great change in the religious state of this country. Deism, though inveterate in the minds of a few, is generally discountenanced. Arianism is nearly extinct, and is nowhere professed by any distinct body of christians. Socinianism is fast hastening to perdition, and cannot long survive the death-blows that have been given it by the labours of a Fuller and a Wardlaw. And as to Arminianism, it is not the same thing that it was a century ago : amongst the Wesleyans particularly it has infused into it a large portion of genuine piety, and embraces all the essentials of the gospel. Missionary Societies and Bible Societies have also given to the present age a character which this country did not possess in the days of President Edwards, when revivals in religion were chiefly confined to the American continent.

upon to be crack-brained, and beside themselves ; and vice and profaneness dreadfully prevail, like a flood which threatens to bear down all before it.

But I proceed to show, secondly, in what respect things are altered for the better. First, the power and influence of the Pope is much diminished. Although, since the former times of the reformation, he has gained ground in extent of dominion ; yet he has lost in degree of influence. The vial which in the beginning of the Reformation was poured out on the throne of the beast, to the great diminishing of his power and authority in the world, has continued running ever since. The pope, soon after the reformation, became less regarded by the princes of Europe than he had been before. Many of the popish princes themselves seem to regard him very little more than they think will serve their own designs ; of which there have been several remarkable proofs and instances of late.

There is far less persecution now than there was in the early times of the reformation. You have heard already how dreadfully persecution raged in former times, and there is something of it still. Some parts of the protestant church are at this day under persecution, and some probably will be so until the church's suffering and travail is at an end, which will not be till the fall of antichrist. But it is now in no measure as it was heretofore. The same spirit of persecution does not prevail, it is more out of fashion even in popish countries. The wickedness of the enemies of Christ, and the opposition against his cause, seem to run in another channel. The humour now is, to despise and laugh at all religion, and to indulge a spirit of indifference about it. However, so far the state of things is better than it has been, that there is so much less of persecution.

There is also a great increase of learning. In the dark times of popery before the reformation, learning was so far decayed, that the world seemed to be overrun with barbarous ignorance. Their very priests

were many of them grossly ignorant. Learning began to revive with the reformation, which was owing very much to the art of printing, which was invented a little before that time; and since then, learning has encreased more and more, and at this day is undoubtedly raised to a greater height than ever it was before. And though but little good use is made of it by the greater part of learned men, yet its increase is of considerable importance, because it is capable of being an excellent handmaid to divinity, and is a talent which, if God gives men a heart, affords them an opportunity to do great things for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, and the good of souls. That learning and knowledge should greatly encrease before the glorious times of the gospel, seems to be foretold in Dan. xii. 4. 'But thou, oh Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be encreased.' And however little now learning is applied to the advancement of religion, we may hope that the days are approaching wherein God will make great use of it for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ.

God in his providence now seems to be acting over again the same part which he did a little before Christ came, when learning greatly prevailed and was at a greater height than ever it had been before; and yet wickedness never prevailed more than then. God was pleased to suffer human learning to come to such a height before he sent the gospel into the world, that they might see the insufficiency of their own wisdom for obtaining the knowledge of God; and when the gospel had prevailed first without the help of human wisdom, then God was pleased to make use of learning as a handmaid. So now learning is at a height beyond what it was in the age when Christ appeared; and yet men trusting to their learning, are groping in the day time as in the night. Learned men are exceedingly divided in their opinions concerning matters of religion, and run into all manner of pernicious

errors. They scorn to submit their reason to divine revelation, to believe any thing that is above their comprehension; and so being wise in their own eyes, they become fools, and even vain in their imaginations, and turn the truth of God into a lie, and their foolish hearts are darkened. Rom. i. 21.

Yet when God has sufficiently shown men the insufficiency of human wisdom and learning for the purposes of religion, and when the appointed time comes for that glorious outpouring of the Spirit of God, when he will himself by his own immediate influence enlighten mens' minds; then may we hope that God will make use of the great encrease of learning, as the means of a glorious advancement of the kingdom of his Son. Then shall human learning be subservient to the understanding of the scriptures, and to a clear explanation and a glorious defence of the doctrines of christianity. And there is no doubt to be made of it, that God in his providence has of late given the world the art of printing, and such a great encrease of learning, to prepare for what he designs to accomplish for his church in the approaching days of its prosperity.

HAVING now shown how the work of redemption has been carried on from the fall of man to the present time, before I proceed any further, I would make some APPLICATION.

From what has been said, we may see great evidence of the truth of the christian religion, and that the scriptures are the words of God. Three arguments in proof of this, may be drawn from what has been said.

(1) It may be argued from that violent and inveterate opposition which has always appeared, of the wickedness of the world against this religion. The religion that God's people have professed from the first, has always been the same as to its essentials. The church of God from the beginning forms but one society. The christian church which has been since Christ's ascension, is manifestly the same

society with the church before Christ came: they are built on the same foundation. The revelation on which both have depended is essentially the same, only the subjects of it are now more clearly revealed in the New Testament than they were in the Old. The church before the flood was built on the foundation of those revelations of Christ which were given to Adam, Abel, Enoch, and others of that period. The church after the flood was built on the revelations made to Noah, Abraham, Melchisedek, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Job, and other holy men. After this the church depended on the scriptures themselves as they gradually increased; so that the church of God has always been built on the foundation of divine revelations which were essentially the same, and are summarily comprehended in the holy scriptures.

Hence the opposition which has been made to the church of God in all ages, has always been against the same religion, and the same revelation. Now therefore the violent and perpetual opposition that has ever been made by the corruption and wickedness of mankind against the church is a strong argument of the truth of this religion, and the revelation upon which the church has always been built. Contraries are well argued from one another. We may well and safely argue that a thing is good, according to the degree in which evil opposes it. Now it is evident, that the wicked world has had a perpetual hatred to the church and her religion, and has made most violent opposition against it.

That the church of God has always met with great opposition in the world, none can deny. This is plain from profane history, so high as that reaches; and before that, divine history gives us the same account. The church of God, and its religion and worship, began to be opposed in the time of Cain and Abel, and was so when the earth was filled with violence in Noah's days. After this, the church was opposed in Egypt; and Israel was always hated by the nations round about, agreeable to that text,

Jer. xii. 9. 'Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird, the birds round about are against her.' After the Babylonish captivity, the church was persecuted by Antiochus Epiphanes and others. And how was Christ persecuted when on earth; and the apostles and other christians by the Jews, before the destruction of Jerusalem. Dreadful also was the opposition of the heathen world against the christian church before the time of Constantine. And since that, still more violent, spiteful, and cruel has been the opposition of antichrist.—There is no such instance of opposition to any other religion. Other professions have enjoyed their religions in peace and quietness, however they have differed from their neighbours. One nation has worshipped one set of gods, and others another, without molesting or disturbing one another about it. All the spite and opposition has been against the religion of the church of Christ, as though they could never satisfy their cruelty. They put their inventions upon the rack to find out torments that should be cruel enough; and yet their thirst has never been satisfied with blood.

So that it is out of doubt, that this religion, and the scriptures, have always been malignantly opposed in the world. The only question is, whether it be the wickedness and corruption of the world or not, that has done this? But of this there can be no more doubt than of the other, if we consider how causeless this cruelty has always been, who were the opposers, and the manner in which they acted. The opposition has chiefly been from heathenism and popery; which are both of them very evil, and the fruits of the blindness, corruption, and wickedness of men, as the very deists themselves confess. The light of nature shows that the religion of heathens, consisting in the worship of idols, and sacrificing their children to them, and in obscene and abominable rites and ceremonies, is wickedness itself. And the superstitious idolatries and usurpations of the church of Rome, are no less contrary to the light of reason. It hence appears, that the

opposition against the church of God has been made by wicked men. And with regard to the opposition of the Jews in Christ's and the apostles' times, it was when the people were generally become exceedingly wicked, as Josephus and other Jewish writers who lived about that time acknowledge. And that it has been mere wickedness that has made this opposition, is manifest from the manner of the opposition, the extreme violence, injustice, and cruelty, with which the church of God has been treated. It seems to show the hand of malignant infernal spirits in it.

Now what reason can be assigned, why the corruption and wickedness of the world should so implacably set itself against the religion of Jesus Christ, and against the scriptures, but only that they are contrary to wickedness, and consequently good and holy? Why should the enemies of Christ, for so many thousand years together, manifest such a mortal hatred of this religion, unless it were the cause of God? If the scriptures be not the word of God, and the religion of the church of Christ be not the true religion, then it must follow, that it is nothing but an imposture and delusion invented by the enemies of God themselves. And if this were so, it is not likely that the enemies of God, and the wickedness of the world, would have maintained such a perpetual and implacable enmity against it.

(2) It is a great argument that the christian church and its religion is from God, that it has been upheld hitherto through all the opposition and dangers it has met with. That the church of God and the true religion, which has been so continually and violently opposed, with so many endeavours to overthrow it, and which has so often been brought to the brink of ruin, and almost swallowed up, through the greatest part of six thousand years, has yet been upheld, does most remarkably show the hand of God in favour of it. This, if properly considered, will appear one of the greatest wonders and miracles that ever came to pass: there is nothing like

it upon the face of the earth. As to the old world before the flood, that was overthrown by a deluge of waters ; but the church of God was still preserved. Satan's visible kingdom on earth was then entirely overthrown ; but the visible kingdom Christ never has been. All the ancient monarchies of former ages, are long since come to an end ; they have all grown old, and have vanished away. 'The moth has eaten them up like a garment, and the worm has eaten them like wool ;' but God's church still remains.

Never were there such potent endeavours to destroy any thing else, as there has been to destroy the church. Other kingdoms and societies of men, which have appeared to be ten times as strong as the church of God, have been destroyed with a hundredth part of the opposition which the church of God has met with. This shows that it is God who has been the protector of the church, for it is most plain that it has not upheld itself by its own strength ; for the most part it has been a very weak society. The children of Israel were but a small handful of people, in comparison of those who often sought their overthrow. In Christ's time, and in the beginning of the christian church after his resurrection, they were but a remnant, while the whole multitude of the Jewish nation were against them. And so in the beginning of the Gentile church ; they were but a small number in comparison with their heathen persecutors. Also in the dark time of antichrist, before the reformation, they were but a handful ; and yet their enemies could not overthrow them. And it has commonly happened that the enemies of the church have not only had the greatest number, but also the civil authority on their side. Israel were only slaves to the Egyptians, and yet they could not destroy them. Likewise in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, under the heathen Roman government, and for the most part since the rise of antichrist, the civil power was all on the side of the persecutors, and the church seemed to be in

their hands. And not only has the strength of the enemies of the church been greatest, but ordinarily the church has not used what strength they had in their own defence, but have committed themselves wholly to God. So it was in the jewish persecutions before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans; and in the heathen persecutions before Constantine, the christians did not attempt to make any forcible resistance to their heathen persecutors. So it has for the most part been under the popish persecutors, and yet they have never been able to overthrow the church of God; but it stands to this very day.

This is still the more wonderful, if we consider how often the church has been brought to the brink of ruin, and the case seemed to be desperate. In the time of the old world, wickedness so prevailed, that but one religious family was left. At the Red Sea, when Pharaoh and his host thought they were quite sure of their prey; and from time to time in the church of Israel, God delivered them, as has been shown. Thus under the tenth and last heathen persecution, their enemies boasted that they had destroyed the christians, and overthrown the church: yet in the midst of their triumph, the christian church rises out of the dust and prevails, and the heathen empire totally falls before it. So when the christian church seemed ready to be swallowed up by Arianism,—when antichrist rose and prevailed, and all the world wondered after the beast, and the church for many hundred years was reduced to a very small number, and the power of the world was engaged to destroy them; yet they could never fully accomplish their design, and at last God wonderfully revived his church in the time of the Reformation, and made it to stand as it were on its feet in the sight of its enemies, and raised it out of their reach. And so since, when the Popish powers have plotted the overthrow of the Reformed church, and have seemed just about to bring their matters to a conclusion, and to finish their design,

then God has wonderfully appeared for the deliverance of his church, as it was in the revolution by King William. Thus it has been from time to time; presently after the darkest times, God has made his church most gloriously to flourish.

If the preservation of the church of God, from the beginning of the world hitherto, attended with such circumstances, is not sufficient to show a divine hand in favour of it, what can be devised that would be so? But if this be from the divine hand, then God owns the church and her religion, and those scriptures on which she is built: and so it will follow, that this is the true religion, and that the scriptures are God's word.

(3) We may draw a further argument for the divine authority of the scriptures from the fulfilment of those things which they have foretold.—I have already observed, as I went along, how the prophecies in scripture were fulfilled: I shall now therefore single out but two instances of the fulfilment of scripture prophecy.

[1] One is in preserving the church from being ruined. I have just now shown what an evidence this is of the divine authority of the scriptures, in itself considered; I now speak of it as a fulfilment of scripture prophecy. This is abundantly foretold and promised in the scriptures, particularly in the text at the beginning of this discourse. There it is said that other things shall fail, other kingdoms and monarchies, which set themselves in opposition, shall come to nothing. 'The moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool:' and so in fact it has come to pass. But it is also foretold, that God's covenant mercy to his church shall continue for ever; and so it has hitherto proved, though now it be so many ages since, and though the church has passed through so many dangers. The same is promised in Isai. liv. xvii. 'No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn.' And again, chap

xlix. 14—16, ‘ But Sion said, the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me.’ See also chap. lix. 21, xliii. 1, 2, and Zech. xii. 2, 3. Christ promises the same in Matt. xvi. 18. ‘ On this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.’ Now if the scriptures be not the word of God, and the church built on them be not of God, how could the persons who foretold this, know it? For if the church were not of God, it was a very unlikely thing ever come to pass. They foretold that other kingdoms should come to nothing, also the great opposition the church should meet with, and the many dangers with which she should be almost swallowed up; and yet they foretold at the same time that the church should remain. Now how could they foresee so unlikely a thing, but by divine inspiration?

[2] The other remarkable instance which I shall mention of the fulfilment of scripture prophecy, is in what is foretold concerning Antichrist, a certain great opposer of Christ and his kingdom.—And (1) It is foretold that this antichrist should arise not among the heathen; but that he should arise by the apostasy and falling away of the christian church. 2 Thess. ii. 3. ‘ For that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.’—(2) That he should set himself up in the temple or visible church of God, pretending to be vested with the power of God himself, as head of the church, ver. 4. (3) It is intimated, that the rise of antichrist should be gradual, ver. 7. ‘ For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth, will let, until he be taken out of the way.’---(4) It is prophesied that he should be a great prince or monarch of the Roman empire: so he is represented as a

horn of the fourth beast in Daniel, or fourth kingdom or monarchy upon earth, as the angel himself explains it, of the little horn. Dan. vii. 24.---(5) It was predicted that his seat should be in the city of Rome itself; so it is said expressly, that the spiritual whore, or false church, should have her seat on seven mountains or hills. Rev. xvii. 6. 'The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth:' and ver. 18. 'The woman which thou sawest, is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth;' which it is certain was at that time the city of Rome.—(6) It was prophesied that this antichrist should reign over peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues, and that all the world should wonder after the beast. Rev. xiii. 3. xvii. 15.---(7) That he should be remarkable for his pride, pretending to great things, and assuming very much to himself. 2 Thess. ii. 4. 'That he should exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped. Rev. xiii. 5. 'And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies.' Dan. vii. 20. The little horn is said to have a mouth speaking very great things, and his look to be more stout than his fellows.---(8) That he should be a cruel persecutor, Dan. vii. 21. The same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them. Rev. xiii. 7. 'And it was given to him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them.' Rev. xvii. 6. 'And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.'---(9) That he should excel in craft and policy. Dan. vii. 8. 'In this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man.' ver. 20. 'Even of that horn that had eyes.' This also came to pass in the church of Rome.---(10) It was foretold that the kings of christendom should be subject to antichrist. Rev. xvii. 12, 13. 'And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.'---

(11) That he should perform pretended miracles and lying wonders. 2 Thess. ii. 9. 'Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders.' Rev. xiii. 13, 14. 'And he doth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth, in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast.' Fire coming down from heaven seems to have reference to the popish excommunications, which were dreaded like lightning. ---(12) It was foretold, that he should forbid to marry and to abstain from meats. 1 Tim. iv. 3. 'Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving.' ---(13) That he should be very rich, and arrive at a great degree of earthly splendour and glory. Rev. xvii. 4. 'The woman was arrayed in purple, and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand.' See also chap. xviii. 7---16. It was foretold, that he should forbid any to buy or sell, but those that had his mark; and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.' Rev. xiii. 17.* ---(14) In enumerating the articles of his merchandize, the souls of men are mentioned as one. Rev. xviii. 13. ---(15) It was foretold that anti-christ would not suffer the bodies of God's people to be buried. Rev. xi. 8, 9. But 'their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, and they shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.' All these particulars have literally come to pass with

* By the mark of the beast may be meant a profession of the popish religion, commonly signified by the sign of the cross in the forehead. Without this none might 'buy or sell.' So the council of Lateran and synod of Tours, under Pope Alexander iii., and the bull of Pope Martin v. forbid any traffic to be carried on with heretics, as the persecuting Roman emperors had done before. The number of his name is to be found in the Greek word *LATEINOS*, *The Latin*; the letters of which as numerals make just 666, as do those of the Hebrew *ROMITH* the *Roman* beast: and about that date the Latin service was enjoined in all the Roman or Latin churches.

respect to the church of Rome, and I might mention many others.

(4) From what has been said, we may learn that the spirit of true christians is a spirit of suffering. Seeing God has so ordered it, that his church should for so long a time be in a suffering state, we may conclude that the spirit of the true church is a suffering spirit, for doubtless God accommodates the state and circumstances of the church to the spirit that he has given them. We have seen what great and numerous sufferings the christian church for the most part has been under for these seventeen hundred years; no wonder therefore that Christ so much inculcated upon his hearers the necessity, if any would be his disciples, that they should deny themselves, and take up their cross and follow him. Matt. xvi. 24.

We may prove that the spirit of the true church of Christ is a suffering one, by the spirit the church has shown and exercised under her sufferings. She has actually, under those terrible persecutions through which she has passed, rather chosen to suffer the most dreadful torments, to sell all for the pearl of great price, and to endure all that her bitterest enemies could inflict, than to renounce Christ and his religion. History furnishes us with a great number of remarkable instances, sets in view a great cloud of witnesses. This abundantly confirms the necessity of being willing to part with all for Christ, to renounce our own ease, our worldly profit, our honour, and all for him, and for the gospel.

Let us now enquire, whether we are of such a spirit. How does it prove upon trial? Does it prove in fact that we are willing to deny ourselves and renounce our worldly interest, and to pass through the trials to which we are called in providence? How small are our trials, compared with those of many of our fellow christians in former ages! And I would on this occasion apply that passage in Jer. xii. 5. 'If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend

with horses?' If you have not been able to endure the light trials to which you have been called in this age, and in this land, how would you be able to endure the far greater trials to which the church has been called in former ages? Every true christian has the spirit of a martyr, and would suffer as a martyr, if he were called to it in providence.

(5) Hence we learn what great reason we have, assuredly to expect the fulfilment of those scriptures which yet remain to be accomplished. The scriptures have foretold many great things yet to come to pass before the end of the world; but there seems to be great difficulties in the way. We seem at present to be very far from such a state as is foretold; but we have abundant reason to expect that these things, however seemingly difficult, will yet be accomplished in their season. We see the faithfulness of God to his promises hitherto, and how true he has been to his church, and how he has remembered his mercy from generation to generation. We may say concerning what God has hitherto done for his church, as Joshua said to the children of Israel; 'That not one thing hath failed of all that the Lord our God hath spoken concerning his church;' but all things are hitherto come to pass agreeable to the divine prediction. Josh. xxiii. 14. This should strengthen our faith in those promises, and encourage us to earnest prayer to God for the accomplishment of the great and glorious things which yet remain to be fulfilled.

It has already been shown how the success of Christ's redemption was carried on through various periods down to the present time.

4. I come now to show how the success of Christ's redemption will be carried on from the present time, till antichrist is fallen, and Satan's visible kingdom on earth destroyed.---And with respect to this space of time, we have nothing to guide us but the prophecies of scripture. Hitherto we have had scripture history or prophecy, together with human history.

But henceforward we have only prophecy to direct us. And here I would pass by those things that are merely conjectural, or are only surmised by some from those prophecies which are doubtful in their interpretation; and shall insist only on those things which are more clear and evident.

We know not what particular events are to come to pass before that glorious work of God's Spirit begins, by which Satan's kingdom is to be overthrown. By the consent of most divines, there are but few things, if any at all, that are foretold to be accomplished before the beginning of that glorious work of God. Some think the slaying of the witnesses is not yet accomplished. Rev. xi. 7, 8. So divines differ with respect to the seven phials, Rev. xvi.; how many are already poured out, or how many remain; though a late expositor, whom I have before mentioned, seems to make it very plain and evident, that all are already poured out but two, namely the sixth on the river Euphrates, and the seventh into the air. But I will not now stand to enquire what is intended by the pouring out of the sixth vial on the river Euphrates, that the way of the kings of the east may be prepared; but would only say, that it seems to be something immediately preparing the way for the destruction of the Spiritual Babylon, as the drying up of the river Euphrates, which ran through the midst of old Babylon, was what prepared the way for the kings of the Medes and Persians, the kings of the east, to come in under the walls, and destroy that city. But whatever this be, it does not appear that it is any thing which shall be accomplished before the work of God's Spirit is begun, by which, as it goes on, Satan's visible kingdom on earth shall be utterly overthrown. And therefore I would proceed directly to consider what the scripture reveals concerning this work of God.

And I would premise two things in general concerning it.

1. We have every reason to conclude from the

scriptures, that just before this work of God begins, it will be a very dark time with respect to the interests of religion in the world. It has been so before those glorious revivals of religion that have taken place already. It was so when Christ came in the flesh, and also before the Reformation from popery. And it seems to be foretold in scripture, that it shall be a time of but little religion, when Christ shall come to set up his kingdom in the world. Thus when Christ spake of his coming, to encourage his elect, who cry to him day and night, he adds this, 'Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?' Luke xviii. 8. This seems to denote a great prevalence of infidelity, just before Christ's appearing to avenge his suffering church. Though Christ's coming at the last judgment is not here to be excluded, yet there seems to be a special respect to his coming to deliver his church from their long continued suffering, persecuted state, which is accomplished only at his coming at the destruction of antichrist, even at that time when the elect are crying, 'How long, oh Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?' Rev. vi. 10. That is the time when it shall be said, 'Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her.' Rev. xviii. 20. It is now a dark time with respect to the interests of religion, and there is a remarkable fulfilment of that prediction, 2 Pet. iii. 3. 'Knowing this, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts.' And so Jude 17, 18. 'But beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.' Whether the times shall be any darker still, or how much so before the beginning of this glorious work of God, we cannot tell.

2. There is no reason to think but that this great work of God will be wrought, though very swiftly

yet gradually. As the children of Israel were gradually brought out of the Babylonish captivity, first one company and then another, and gradually rebuilt their city and temple: and as the heathen Roman empire was destroyed by a gradual, though a very swift prevalency of the gospel; so, though there are many things which seem to intimate that the work of God would be exceeding swift, and many wonderful events be suddenly brought to pass, and some great parts of Satan's visible kingdom have a very sudden fall, yet all will not be accomplished at once, as by some great miracle, (as the resurrection of the dead at the end of the world will be all at once;) but this is a work which will be accomplished by means, by the preaching of the gospel, and the use of the ordinary means of grace, and so it will be gradual. Some shall be converted, and be the means of converting others. God's Spirit shall be poured out first to raise up instruments, and those instruments shall be used and succeed. And doubtless one nation shall be enlightened and converted after another, one false religion exploded after another. By the representation in Dan. ii. 3, 4, the stone cut out of the mountain without hands gradually grows. So Christ teaches us, that the kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, and like leaven hid in three measures of meal. Matt. xiii. 31, 32, 33. The same representation we have in the vision of the waters of the sanctuary. Ezek. xlvi.—The scriptures mention several successive events by which this glorious work should be accomplished. The angel speaking to the prophet Daniel of those times, mentions two periods, at the end of which glorious things should be accomplished. Dan. xii. 11. 'From the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.' But then he adds, ver. 12, 'Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days;' intimating that something very glorious should be

accomplished at the end of the former period, but something much more glorious at the end of the latter.---But I proceed to show,

(3) That this great work shall be accomplished, not by the authority of princes, nor by the wisdom of learned men, but by the Holy Spirit. Zech. iv. 6, 7. 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, oh great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain, and he shall bring forth the head stone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.' So the Prophet Ezekiel, speaking of this great work of God, says, 'Neither will I hide my face any more from them; for I have poured out my Spirit on the house of Israel, saith the Lord God.' Ezek. xxxix. 29. We know not where this pouring out of the Spirit shall begin, or whether in many places at once, or whether what has already been, be not some forerunner and beginning of it.

This pouring out of the Spirit of God, when it is begun, shall soon bring great multitudes to forsake that vice and wickedness which now so generally prevails, and shall cause that vital religion, which is now so much despised in the world, to revive. The work of conversion shall break forth, and go on in such a manner as never has been hitherto; agreeable to that promise, Isai. xlv. 3---5. 'I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground.' God, by pouring out his holy Spirit, will furnish instruments for carrying on this work; will fill them with knowledge and wisdom, and fervent zeal for promoting the kingdom of Christ, and the salvation of souls, and propagating the gospel in the world. So that the gospel shall begin to be preached with abundantly greater clearness and power than it has hitherto been: for this great work of God shall be brought to pass by the preaching of the gospel, which shall be powerfully propagated in the world, before the fall of Babylon. Rev. xiv. 6---8.

This was typified of old by the sounding of the

silver trumpets in Israel, at the beginning of their jubilee. Lev. xxv. 9. 'Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land.' The glorious times which are approaching, are as it were the church's jubilee, which shall be introduced by the sounding of the silver trumpet of the gospel, as it is foretold in Isai. xxvii. 13. 'It shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts of the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.' There shall also be a glorious effusion of the Spirit with this clear and powerful preaching of the gospel, to make it successful for reviving those holy doctrines of religion which are now chiefly ridiculed in the world, and turning many from heresy, and from popery, and from other false religions; and also for turning many from their vice and profaneness, and for bringing vast multitudes savingly to Christ.

That work of conversion shall go on in a wonderful manner, and spread more and more. Many shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, and shall come as it were in flocks, one flock and multitude after another. Isai. lx. 4—8. 'Lift up thine eyes round about, and see; all they gather themselves together, they come to thee; thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see and flow together. 'Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?' And it being represented in the forementioned place, Rev. xiv. 6—8, that the gospel shall be preached to every tongue, and kindred, and nation, and people, before the fall of antichrist; so we may suppose, that it will soon be gloriously successful to bring in multitudes from every nation; and it shall spread with wonderful swiftness, and vast numbers shall suddenly be brought in at once;

and as it is said, ' a nation shall be born in a day.' Isai. lxvi. 7---9.

(4) This pouring out of the Spirit of God will not effect the overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom, till there has first been a violent and mighty opposition made. In this the scripture is plain, that when Christ is thus gloriously coming forth, and the destruction of antichrist is ready at hand, and Satan's kingdom begins to totter, the powers of the kingdom of darkness will rise up, and mightily exert themselves to prevent their kingdom being overthrown. Thus after the pouring out of the sixth phial, which was to dry up the river Euphrates, to prepare the way for the destruction of spiritual Babylon, it is represented, Rev. xvi., as though the powers of hell will be mightily alarmed, and should stir up themselves to oppose the kingdom of Christ, before the seventh and last phial shall be poured out, which shall give them a final and complete overthrow. After an account of the pouring out of the sixth phial, the beloved disciple informs us in the following verses, that ' three unclean spirits, like frogs, shall go forth unto the kings of the earth, to gather them together to the battle of the great day of God Almighty.' Rev. xvi. 12. This seems to be the last and greatest effort of Satan to save his kingdom from being overthrown; though perhaps he may make as great an effort towards the end of the world to regain it.

When the Spirit begins to be gloriously poured forth, and the devil sees such multitudes flocking to Christ in one nation and another, and the foundations of his kingdom daily undermining, its pillars breaking, and the whole ready to fall, it will greatly alarm him. Satan has ever had a dread of his kingdom being overthrown, and has long been endeavouring to fortify it, and to prevent its ruin. To this end he set up the two mighty kingdoms of Antichrist and Mahomet, and has nursed all the heresies and superstitions in the world: but when he sees

all beginning to fall, it will rouse him exceedingly. If Satan dreaded being cast out of the Roman empire, how much more does he dread being cast out of the whole world.

It seems as though in this last great opposition which shall be made against the church to defend the kingdom of Satan, that all the forces of antichrist, mahometanism and heathenism, will be united; all the power of Satan's visible kingdom throughout the world. Therefore it is said, that 'spirits of devils shall go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them together to the battle of the great day of God Almighty.' And these spirits are said to come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet; that is, there shall be the spirit of popery, and the spirit of mahometanism, and the spirit of heathenism, all united. By the beast is meant antichrist; by the dragon, in this book, is commonly meant the devil, as he reigns over his heathen kingdom; by the false prophet, is sometimes meant the pope and his clergy. But here an eye seems to be had to Mahomet, whom his followers call the great prophet of God. This will be as it were the dying struggle of the old serpent, a battle wherein he will fight as one that is desperate.

We know not particularly in what manner this opposition will be made. It is represented as a battle; it is called 'the battle of the great day of God Almighty.' There will be some way or other a mighty struggle between Satan's kingdom and the church, and probably in all manner of ways; and doubtless great opposition will be made by external force. The princes of the world, who are on the devil's side, shall join hand in hand; for it is said, 'The kings of the earth are gathered together to battle,' Rev. xix. 19. Probably also there will be great opposition of subtle disputers and carnal reasoning; great persecution in many places, and virulent reproaches. Doubtless the devil will now

ply his skill, as well as his strength to the utmost. The allies and subjects who belong to his kingdom, will every where be stirred up, and engaged to make a united and violent opposition against this holy religion, which they see prevailing so mightily in the world.—But,

(5) Christ and his church shall in this battle obtain a complete victory over their enemies. They shall be totally routed and overthrown in this their last effort. When the powers of hell and earth are thus gathered together against Christ, and his armies shall come forth against them by his word and Spirit to fight with them, in how august and glorious a manner is this described. Rev. xix. 11---16. ‘And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and he that sat upon him is called faithful and true,’ &c. And to represent to us how great the victory will be which they shall obtain, and how mighty the overthrow of their enemies, it is said ver. 17, 18, that ‘all the fowls of heaven are called together, to eat the great supper given them, of the flesh of kings, and captains, and mighty men;’ and in the following verses we have an account of the victory and final overthrow.

In this victory the seventh phial shall be poured out. Of the great army that should be collected together against Christ, it is said, ‘He gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon;’ and then ‘the seventh angel poured out his phial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.’ Rev. xvi. 16. Now the business is done for Satan and his adherents. When this victory is obtained, all is in effect done. Satan’s last and greatest opposition is conquered, all his measures are defeated, the pillars of his kingdom broken, and will fall of course. The devil is utterly baffled and confounded, and knows not what else to do. He now sees his antichristian, mahometan, and heathenish kingdoms throughout the world, all tumbling about his ears. He and his most power-

ful instruments are taken captive. Now that is in effect done which the church of God had been so long waiting and hoping for, and so earnestly crying to God for, saying, 'How long, oh Lord, holy and true?' Now the time is come.

The angel that set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the earth, lift up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and all things that are therein, and the earth, and the things that are therein, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that when the seventh angel should come to sound, 'the time should be no longer.' Rev. x. 5---7. And now the time is come; now the seventh trumpet sounds, and the seventh vial is poured out, both together; intimating, that now all is finished as to the overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom on earth. This victory shall be by far the greatest that ever was obtained over Satan and his adherents. By this blow, with which the stone cut out of the mountain without hands shall strike the image of gold, and silver, and brass, and iron, and clay, it shall be all broken to pieces. This will be a finishing blow to the image, so that it shall become as the chaff of the summer threshing floor. Dan. ii. 35.

In this victory there will be a most glorious display of divine power. Christ shall appear in the character of 'King of kings, and Lord of lords,' and shall dash his enemies, even the strongest and proudest of them, in pieces; as a potter's vessel shall they be broken to shivers. Then shall strength be shown out of weakness, and Christ shall cause his church as it were to thresh the mountains, Isai. xli. 15. 'Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing-instrument, having teeth; thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff.' See also Isai. xliii. 13---15.

(6) Consequent on this victory, Satan's visible kingdom on earth shall be destroyed. When Satan is conquered in this last battle, the church of Christ will have easy work of it; as when Joshua and the

children of Israel had obtained that great victory over the five kings of the Amorites, when the sun stood still, and God sent great hailstones upon their enemies. After that they went from one city to another, and burnt them with fire: they had easy work of subduing the cities and country to which they belonged. So it was also after that other great battle that Joshua had with that great multitude at the waters of Merom. Josh. xi. 5---9. So after this glorious victory of Christ and his church over their enemies, the chief powers of Satan's kingdom, they shall destroy that kingdom in all those cities and countries to which they belong. Then the word of God shall have a swift progress through the earth; as it is said, that on the pouring out of the seventh phial, 'the cities of the nations fell, and every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.' Rev. xvi. 19, 20. When once the stone cut out of the mountain without hands had broken the image in pieces, it was easy to abolish all remains of it. The very wind will carry it away as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor. Because Satan's visible kingdom on earth shall now be destroyed, therefore it is said, that the seventh phial by which this shall be done, shall be poured out into the air; which is represented in scripture as the special seat of his kingdom; for he is called 'the prince of the power of the air.' Ephes. ii. 2. Now is come the time for punishing Leviathan, that piercing serpent, of which we read in Isai. xxvii. 1. 'In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword, shall punish Leviathan the piercing serpent, even Leviathan, that crooked serpent, and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.'

Concerning this overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom on earth, I would show wherein it will chiefly consist, and the extent and universality of this overthrow.

[1] Observe wherein the overthrow of Satan's kingdom will chiefly consist. I shall mention the principal things in which it will consist, without

pretending to determine in what order they shall come to pass, or which shall be accomplished first, or whether they shall be accomplished together.

Heresies, infidelity, and superstition, among those who have been brought up under the light of the gospel, will then be abolished. Then there will be an end to Socinianism, Arianism, Quakerism, and Arminianism. Deism, which is now so bold and confident in infidelity, shall then be crushed to nothing; and all shall agree in the same great and important doctrines of the gospel, agreeable to that promise, Zech. xiv. 9. 'And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one.' Then shall all superstition be abolished, and all shall agree in worshipping God in his own ways. 'I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them.' Jer. xxxii. 39.

The kingdom of antichrist shall be utterly overthrown. His kingdom and dominion has been much brought down already, by the phial poured out on his throne at the Reformation; but then it shall be utterly destroyed. Then shall be proclaimed, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen.' When the seventh angel sounds, 'the time, times and half, shall be out, and the time shall be no longer.' Then shall be accomplished concerning antichrist the things which are written, relative to the spiritual Babylon, that has for so many ages been the great enemy of the christian church, first under heathenism, then under popery. That proud city which lifted herself up to heaven, and above God himself in her pride and haughtiness; that cruel, bloody city, shall come down to the ground. Then shall be fulfilled that saying, 'He bringeth down them that dwell on high, the lofty city he layeth it low, he layeth it low, even to the ground, he bringeth it even to the dust. She shall be thrown down with violence, like a great milstone cast into the sea, and shall be found no more at all; but shall become a habitation of devils,

been rejected much longer than Judah, be brought in with their brethren. The prophecies of Hosea especially seem to hold this forth, that in the future glorious times of the church, both Judah and Ephraim, or Judah and the ten tribes, shall be brought in together, and shall be united as one people, as they formerly were under David and Solomon. 'Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head,' Hosea i. 11; and so in the last chapter, and other parts of this prophecy. Though we do not know the time in which this conversion of the nation of Israel will come to pass; yet thus much we may determine by scripture, that it will be before the glory of the Gentile part of the church shall be fully accomplished; because it is said, that their coming in shall 'be life from the dead to the Gentiles.' Rom. xi. 12—15.

Then also shall Satan's pagan kingdom be overthrown. Gross heathenism still possesses a great part of the earth, and there are supposed to be more heathens now in the world, than of all other professions taken together, Jews, Mahometans, and Christians. But then the heathen nations shall be enlightened with the glorious gospel. There will be a wonderful spirit of pity towards them, and multitudes will manifest a zeal for their instruction and conversion. Many shall go forth, and carry to them the gospel; then shall the joyful sound be heard among them, and the Sun of righteousness shall arise with his glorious light shining on those many vast regions of the earth that have been covered with heathen darkness for some thousands of years. Many of them doubtless, ever since the time of Moses and Abraham, have lain thus long in a miserable condition, under the cruel tyranny of the devil, who has all this while blinded and made a prey of them from generation to generation. Now the glad tidings of the gospel shall sound there, and they shall be brought out of darkness into marvellous light.

It is promised in many places, that heathenism shall thus be destroyed. Thus it is said, that 'the gods which have not made these heavens and this earth, shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens, Jer. x. 11; and that he will utterly abolish idols.' Isai. ii. 18. Then the nations of Africa, and other heathens who chiefly fill that quarter of the world, who now seem to be in a state but little above the beasts, and in some respects below them, shall be enlightened with glorious light, and delivered from all their darkness, and shall become a civilized, intelligent, and holy people. Then shall the vast continent of America, so great a part of which is covered with barbarous ignorance and cruelty, be every where blessed with glorious gospel light and christian love; and instead of worshipping the devil, as now they do, they shall serve God, and praises shall be sung every where to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world. So we may expect it will be in that great and populous part of the world, the East Indies, which are now mostly inhabited by the worshippers of Satan; and so throughout the vast country of Great Tartary. Then the kingdom of Christ will be established in those continents which have been more lately discovered towards the north and south poles, where now men differ very little from wild beasts, excepting that they worship the devil, and beasts do not. The same will be the case with those countries which have never yet been discovered. Thus will be gloriously fulfilled that promise: 'The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them: and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.' Isai. xxxv. 1—7.

[2] Having thus shown wherein this overthrow of Satan's kingdom will consist, I come now to observe its universal extent. The visible kingdom of Satan shall be overthrown, and the kingdom of Christ set up on the ruins of it, every where throughout the habitable globe. Now shall the promise made to Abraham be fulfilled, that 'in him

and in his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed ;' and Christ shall become ' the desire of all nations.' Now the kingdom of Christ, in the most strict and literal sense, shall be extended to all nations, and throughout the earth. There are many passages of scripture that can be understood in no other sense. What can be more universal than this : ' The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.' Isai. xi. 9. As there is no channel or cavity of the sea any where, but what is covered with water ; so there shall be no part of the habitable world, but what shall be covered with the knowledge of God. So it is foretold in Isai. xlv. 22, that all the ends of the earth shall look to Christ, and be saved. And to show that the words are to be understood in the most universal sense, it is said in the next verse, ' I have sworn by myself ; the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return ; that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.' So the prophet Daniel, chap. vii. 27. ' And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High.' When the devil was cast out of the Roman empire, that being the principal part of the world, and the other nations being mean in comparison of that vast empire, it was represented as Satan's being cast out of heaven to the earth. Rev. xii. 9. But it is represented that he shall be cast out of the earth too, and shut up in hell. Rev. xx. 1---3. This is the greatest revolution by far that ever came to pass : therefore it is said, that on pouring out the seventh phial there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great. Rev. xvi. 17, 18.

(7) This is the third great dispensation of providence, which in scripture is compared to Christ's coming to judgment. So it is said, after the sixth phial, and after the devil's armies were gathered together to their great battle, and just before Christ's

glorious victory over them, 'Behold, I come quickly; blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments.' Rev. xvi. 15. So when speaking of antichrist, it is said, 'Then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.' 2 Thess. ii. 8. Christ's coming to set up his kingdom on earth, and to destroy antichrist, is called his coming with the clouds of heaven. Dan. vii. 13, 14. And this is more like Christ's last coming to judgment, than any of the preceding dispensations which are so called.

[1] Because this dispensation is greater and more universal, and so more like the day of judgment, which respects the whole world.

[2] On account of the spiritual resurrection which will accompany it, resembling the general resurrection at the end of the world. Rev. xx. 4.

[3] Because of the terrible judgments and fearful destruction which shall now be executed on God's enemies. There will doubtless be at the introduction of this dispensation a visible and awful hand of God against blasphemers, and obstinate enemies of Christ; and especially antichrist himself, which is compared to the casting of antichrist into the burning flame, and to casting him alive into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone. Dan. vii. 11. Rev. xix. 20. Then shall the cruel church of Rome suffer those judgments from God, which shall be far more dreadful than her cruelest persecutions of the saints. Rev. xviii. 6, 7. The judgments which God shall execute on the enemies of the church are so great, that they are compared to God's sending great hailstones from heaven upon them. Rev. xvi. 21. 'And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God, because of the plague of the hail, for the plague thereof was exceeding great.' And now shall be the treading of the winepress of the wrath of God. Rev. xiv. 19, 20.

[4] This shall put an end to the church's suffering

state, and shall be attended with their glorious and joyful praises. Indeed, after this, near the end of the world, the church shall be greatly threatened ; but it shall be only for a little season, for as the times of the church's rest are but short, before the long day of her afflictions are at an end, so whatever affliction she may suffer after this, it will be very short : otherwise the day of the church's affliction and persecution shall now come to a final end. Rev. xx. 3. The scriptures, in many places, speak of this time as the end of the suffering state of the church. Isai. li. 22. God says to his church, with respect to time, ' Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury ; thou shalt no more drink it again.' Chap. xl. 1, 2. ' Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably unto Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned ; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.' Ver. 20 : ' The Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.' Zeph. iii. 15. ' The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy : the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee : thou shalt not see evil any more.' See also Isai. liv. 8, 9.

The time previous to this, hath been the church's sowing time, wherein she sowed in tears and in blood ; but now is her harvest, wherein she will come again rejoicing, bringing her sheaves with her. Now the time of the travail of the woman clothed with the sun is at an end ; now she hath brought forth her son ; for this glorious setting up of the kingdom of Christ throughout the world, is what the church had been in travail for, with such terrible pangs, for so many ages. Isai. xxvi. 17. ' Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of der delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs : so have we been in thy sight, oh Lord.' See chap. lx. 20. lxi. 10, 11. And now the church shall forget her sorrow, since a man-child is born into the

world : now succeed her joyful praise and triumph. Her praises shall then go up to God from all parts of the earth, Isai. xlii. 10—12 ; and praise shall not only fill the earth, but also heaven. The church on earth, and the church in heaven, shall both gloriously rejoice and praise God, as with one heart, on that occasion. Without doubt it will be a time of very distinguished joy and praise among the holy prophets and apostles, and other saints in heaven. Rev. xxiii. 20. ‘ Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her.’ Isai. xliv. 23. ‘ Sing, oh ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it ; shout, ye lower parts of the earth ; break forth into singing, ye mountains ; oh forest, and every tree therein : for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.’ See what joyful praises are sung to God on this occasion by the universal church in heaven and earth, Rev. xix. 1—7. ‘ Allelujah, salvation and honour and power unto the Lord our God.’

[5] This dispensation is above all preceding ones, like Christ’s coming to judgment, in that it puts an end to the former state of the world, and introduces his everlasting kingdom. Now Satan’s visible kingdom shall be overthrown, after it has stood ever since the building of Babel ; and the old heavens and the old earth shall pass away, and the new heavens and new earth be set up in a far more glorious manner than ever before.

Thus I have shown how the success of Christ’s purchase has been carried on through the times of the afflicted state of the christian church, from Christ’s resurrection, until antichrist is fallen, and Satan’s visible kingdom on earth is overthrown.

IV. The success of Christ’s Redemption carried on in a prosperous state.

I COME now to show how the success of redemption will be carried on through that space wherein the christian church shall for the most part be in a

state of peace and prosperity. And in order to this, I would speak, first, of the prosperous state of the church through the greater part of this period; and secondly, of the great apostasy there shall be towards the close of it.

First, Consider the prosperous state of the church throughout the greater part of this period. And here observe,

1. That this is most properly the time of the kingdom of heaven upon earth. Though the kingdom of heaven was in a degree set up soon after Christ's resurrection, and in a farther degree in the time of Constantine; and though the christian church in all ages of it is called the kingdom of heaven; yet this is most eminently the kingdom of heaven upon earth, the time principally intended by the prophecies of Daniel, which speak of the kingdom of heaven, whence the Jews took the expression. Dan. ii. 44.

2. That this is the grand period for the fulfilment of all the prophecies of the Old Testament, which speak of the glorious times of the gospel in the latter days. Though there has been a blessed fulfilment of those prophecies already, in the times of the apostles, and of Constantine; yet the expressions are too high to suit any other time entirely, but that which is to succeed the fall of antichrist. This is most properly the glorious day of the gospel. Other times are only forerunners and preparatories to this; other times were the seedtime, but this is the harvest. More particularly,

(1) It will be a time of great light and knowledge. The present days are days of darkness, in comparison of those days. The light of that glorious time shall be so great, that it is represented as though there should then be no night, but only day, neither evening nor darkness. Zech. xiv. 6, 7. 'It shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark. But it shall be one day, which shall be known to the Lord, not day nor night: but

it shall come to pass, that at evening-time it shall be light.' It is further represented, as though God would then give such light to his church, that it should so much exceed the glory of the light of the sun and moon, that they should be ashamed. Isai. xxiv. 23. 'Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.' There is a kind of veil now cast over the greater part of the world, which keeps them in darkness; but then this veil shall be removed. Isai. xxv. 7. 'He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations.' And then all countries and nations, even those which are now most ignorant, shall be full of light and knowledge; and not only divines, but ordinary christians shall then be very intelligent in religion. Isai. xxxii. 3, 4. 'The eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge.' Jer. xxxi. 34. 'And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them.' There shall then be a wonderful unraveling of the difficulties in the doctrines of religion, and a clearing up of seeming inconsistencies. Isai. xl. 4, 5. 'Crooked things shall be made straight, and rough places plain, and darkness shall become light before God's people.' Difficulties in scripture shall then be cleared up, and mysteries discovered in the word of God, which were never revealed before. This seems to be compared to removing the veil, and discovering the ark of the testimony to the people, which before used to be kept in the secret part of the temple, and was never seen by them. Thus, at the sounding of the seventh angel, when it is proclaimed, 'That the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ:' it is added, that 'the temple of

God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament.' Rev. xi. 15, 19. So great shall be the encrease of knowledge in this time, that heaven shall be as it were opened to the church of God on earth.

(2) It shall be a time of great holiness. Vital religion shall every where prevail and reign, it shall not be an empty profession, as it now mostly is, but holiness of heart and life shall abundantly prevail. Those times shall be an exception from what Christ says of the ordinary state of the church, that there shall be but few saved ; for now holiness shall become general, and ' the people shall be all righteous.' Not that there will be none remaining in a Christless condition ; but that visible wickedness shall be suppressed every where, and true holiness shall become general, though not universal. It shall also be a wonderful time, not only for the multitude of godly men, but for eminency of grace. Isai. lxxv. 20. ' There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days : for the child shall die a hundred years old, but the sinner being a hundred years old, shall be accursed.' Zech. xii. 8. ' He that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David ; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord before them.' And holiness shall then be as it were inscribed on every thing, on all men's common business and employments, and the common utensils of life : all shall be as it were dedicated to God, and applied to holy purposes : every thing shall then be done to the glory of God. ' Her merchandize and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord ;' and as God's people then shall be eminent in holiness of heart, so they shall be also in holiness of life and practice. Isai. xxiii. 18. Zech. xiv. 20, 21.

(3) It shall be a time wherein religion shall in every respect be uppermost in the world. It shall be had in great esteem and honour. The saints have hitherto for the most part been kept under, and wicked men have governed ; but now they will

be uppermost. The kingdom shall be given into 'the hands of the saints of the Most high God, and they shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years.' Rev. xx. 4. In that day, such persons as are eminent for true piety and religion, shall be chiefly promoted to places of trust and authority. Vital religion shall then take possession of palaces and thrones, and those who are in the highest advancement shall be holy men. Isai. xlix. 23. 'Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers.' Kings shall employ all their power, and glory and riches, for the advancement of the honour and glory of Christ, and the good of his church. Isai. lx. 16. 'Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings.' And the great men of the world, and the rich merchants, and others who have wealth and influence, shall devote all to Christ and his church. 'The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift, even the rich among the people shall entreat their favour.' Psal. xlv. 12.

(4) Those will be times of great peace and love. There shall then be universal peace and a good understanding among the nations of the world, instead of such confusion, wars and bloodshed, as has hitherto been from one age to another. Isai. ii. 4. 'He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.' All the instruments of war shall be destroyed, as being useless. Psal. xlv. 9. 'He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.' Then shall all nations dwell quietly and safely, without fear of any enemy. 'My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.' Isai. xxxii. 18. Zech. viii. 10. ix. 10.

Then shall malice, envy, wrath and revenge, be

suppressed everywhere, and peace and love prevail between man and man. This is most elegantly set forth in Isai. xi. 6—10. Then shall there be peace and love between rulers and subjects. Rulers shall love their people, and with all their might seek their best good; and the people shall love their rulers, and shall joyfully submit to them, and give them that honour which is their due. There shall also be a happy love between ministers and people; for ‘he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers.’ Mal. iv. 6. Then shall flourish in an eminent manner those christian virtues of meekness, forgiveness, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, brotherly-kindness, those excellent fruits of the Spirit. Men in their temper and disposition shall be like the Lamb of God, the lovely Jesus; the members shall be conformed to the head.

Then shall all the world be united in one amiable society. All nations, on every side of the globe, shall be knit together in sweet harmony. All parts of God’s church shall assist and promote the spiritual good of one another. A communication shall then be upheld between all parts of the world to that end: and the art of navigation, which is now applied so much to favour men’s covetousness and pride, and is used so much by wicked debauched men, shall then be consecrated to God, and rendered subservient to the interests of religion. Isai. lx. 5---9. Men shall then express their love one to another, not only in words, but in deeds of charity. ‘The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful; but the liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand.’ Isai. xxxii. 5, 8.

(5) It will be a time of excellent order in the church of Christ. The true government and discipline of the church will then be settled and practised. All the world shall then be as one church, one orderly, regular, beautiful society. And as the body shall be one, so the members shall be in beautiful

proportion to each other. Then shall that saying be verified: 'Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together.' Psal. cxxii. 3.

(6) The church of God shall then be beautiful and glorious on these accounts; yea it will appear in perfection of beauty. 'Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee--- He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.' The church will then be the greatest image of heaven itself. Isai. lx. 1. lxi. 10.

(7) That will be a time of the greatest temporal prosperity. Such a spiritual state as we have just described, has a natural tendency to temporal prosperity. It has a tendency to health and long life; and that this will actually be the case, is evident from Zech. viii. 4. 'Thus saith the Lord of hosts, There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age.' It has also a natural tendency to procure ease, quietness, pleasantness, and cheerfulness of mind; also wealth, and a great increase of children, as it is intimated in Zech. viii. 5. 'The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls, playing in the streets thereof.'---But further, the temporal prosperity of the people of God will also be promoted by a remarkable blessing from heaven. Isai. lxxv. 21. 'They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them---They shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, and none shall make them afraid---The seed shall be prosperous, the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew, and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things.' Mic. iv. 4. Zech. viii. 12. Jer. xxxi. 12, 13. Amos ix. 13. Yea, then they shall receive all manner of tokens of God's presence, and acceptance and favour. Jer. xxxiii. 9. 'It shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before

all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them; and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it.' Even the days of Solomon were but an image of those days, as to the temporal prosperity which shall obtain in them.

(8) It will also be a time of great rejoicing. 'The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away—Ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you---That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out and be delighted with the abundance of her glory---With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.' Isai. xxxv. 10. lv. 12. lxvi. 11. xii. 3. Then will be a time of feasting, the glorious wedding-day of the church upon earth. 'Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready---Blessed are they which are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb.' Rev. xix. 7, 9.

(9) The duration of this state of the church's prosperity, is every where represented as of long continuance. The former intervals of rest and prosperity, as we before observed, are represented as short; but the representations of this state are quite different. Rev. xx. 4. 'I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus,---and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.' 'Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.' Isai. lx. 15.

This may suffice as to the prosperous state of the church through the greater part of the period, from the destruction of Satan's visible kingdom in the world, to Christ's appearing in the clouds of heaven to judgment.

II. Observe the great apostasy there should be towards the close of this period, and how eminently the church should be for a short time threatened by her enemies.

1. A little before the end of the world there shall be a very great apostasy, wherein great part of the world shall fall away from Christ and his church. It is said that Satan should be cast into the bottomless pit, and shut up, and have a seal set upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years be fulfilled; and after that, he must be loosed out of his prison for a little season. Accordingly we are told, that when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go forth to deceive the nations, which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog. Rev. xx. 3, 7, 8. This seems to intimate that the apostasy will be very general. The nations of the four quarters of the earth shall be deceived; and the number of those who shall now turn enemies to Christ shall be very great, as the army of Gog and Magog is represented in Ezekiel, and in Rev. xx. 8. The number of them is as the sand of the sea, and they went upon the breadth of the earth, as though they were an army numerous enough to reach from one side of the globe to the other.

Thus after such a happy and glorious season, such a long day of light and holiness, of love and peace and joy, now it shall begin again to be a dark time. Satan shall once more set up his dominion in the world, and it shall again become a scene of darkness and wickedness. The bottomless pit shall be opened, devils shall again come out of it, and a dreadful smoke shall ascend to darken the world. The church of Christ, instead of extending to the utmost bounds of the earth, as it did before, shall again be reduced to narrow limits. Mankind being continued so long in a state of great prosperity, will now begin to abuse their prosperity, to serve their lusts and corruptions. Luke xvii. 26.

2. Apostates shall make great opposition to the church of God. The church shall seem to be eminently threatened with a sudden and entire overthrow by them. Satan shall gather them together to battle, as the sand on the sea shore ; ' and they shall go up on the breadth of the earth, and compass the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city.' Rev. xx. 8, 9. So that this beloved city shall seem just ready to be swallowed up by them ; for her enemies shall not only threaten her, but shall actually have gathered together against her ; and not only so, but shall have besieged her, and shall have compassed her about on every side.

There is nothing in the prophecy which seems to intimate the church's actually falling into their hands, as it has fallen into the hands of antichrist, to whom it was given to make war with the saints and to ' overcome ' them. Rev. xiii. 7. God will never suffer this to be again, after the fall of antichrist ; for then the day of her mourning shall be ended. But the church shall seem most eminently threatened with utter and sudden destruction.

3. Now the state of things will appear most remarkably to call for Christ's immediate appearance to judgment. For then the world shall be filled with the most aggravated wickedness, the greater part of it shall become open enemies to Christ, and their wickedness will be dreadfully aggravated by their apostasy. Before the fall of antichrist, most parts of the world are full of wicked men. But the greater part of these are poor heathens, who never enjoyed the light of the gospel, and others that have been bred up in the mahometan or popish darkness. But these are apostates from the christian church, and the visible kingdom of Christ, in which they enjoyed the great light and privileges of the glorious times of the church, which shall be incomparably greater than the light and privileges which the church of God now enjoys. This apostasy will be more like that of the fallen angels than any that ever has been ; for they apostatised, and turned enemies

to Christ, though they enjoyed the light of heaven; and these will apostatise and turn enemies to him, though they have enjoyed the light and privileges of the glorious times of the church. And that such should turn open and avowed enemies to Christ, and seek the ruin of his church, will cry aloud for immediate vengeance.

The Wickedness of the world will remarkably call for Christ's immediate appearance in flaming fire to take vengeance on them, because of the way in which they shall manifest their wickedness, which will be by scoffing and blaspheming Christ and his holy religion: and particularly, they will scoff at the notion of Christ's coming to judgment, of which the church shall be in expectation, and of which they will warn them. For now doubtless will be another and principal fulfilment of that text: 'Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.' 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4. They shall be in no expectation of the coming of Christ to judgment, but shall give up themselves to their lusts, to eat and drink, and wallow in sensual delights, as though they were to continue for ever. They shall despise the warnings the church shall give them of the coming of Christ to judgment, as the people of the old world despised what Noah told them of the approaching flood, and as the people of Sodom did when Lot said to them, 'The Lord will destroy this city.' The wickedness will also cry aloud to heaven for Christ's appearing to take vengeance on his enemies, for their attempts against the holy city of God.

The Number of the wicked is another thing which shall especially call for Christ's coming: for the world will doubtless then be exceedingly full of people, having continued so long in so great a state of prosperity, without such desolating calamities, as wars, pestilences, and the like to diminish them,

and the most of this populous world will be such wicked contemptuous apostates from God. And if the wickedness of the old world, when men began to multiply on the earth, called for its destruction by a deluge of waters, this wickedness will as much call for its destruction by a deluge of fire.

Again, the Circumstances of the church at that day will also eminently call for the immediate appearance of Christ, as they will be compassed about by their blasphemous enemies, and just ready to be swallowed up by them. It will be a most distressing time with the church, excepting the comfort they will have in the hope of deliverance from God, for all other help will seem to fail. The case will be come to the last extremity, and there will be an immediate necessity for Christ's coming to their deliverance. But though the church shall be so eminently threatened, yet shall it be preserved till Christ shall appear in the glory of his Father with all his holy angels. And then shall all the elect be gathered in, whose names were written in the book of life before the foundation of the world, not one soul shall be lost. The mystical body of Christ will be complete as to its number of parts, having every one of its members. In this respect, the work of redemption will now be finished; and the end for which the means of grace have been instituted shall be obtained. All that effect which was intended to be accomplished by them shall now be accomplished.

V. Completion of the work of redemption in a future state.

THUS I have shown how the success of Christ's redemption has been accomplished during the continuance of the christian church under the means of grace. We have seen what great revolutions there have been, and are to be, during this space of time; how the wheels of providence have gone round for the accomplishment of the success of Christ's pur-

chase, in the bestowment of grace on the elect. We are now come to the time, when the course of things in this state of it is finished, and all things are ripe for Christ's coming to judgment.

The proposition before us is, That from the resurrection of Christ to the end of the world, the whole time is taken up in procuring the success of Christ's purchase of redemption; and I observe that the success of Christ's purchase is of two kinds, consisting either in grace or glory; and that the success consisting in the former of these, is to be seen in those works of God which are wrought during those ages that the church is continued under the means of grace; and that the success, consisting in the latter, will chiefly be accomplished at the day of judgment.

Having already shown how the former kind of success has been accomplished, I come now to that kind of success which is accomplished in the bestowment of glory on the church, which shall chiefly be at the day of judgment.—And here I would mention one or two things in general concerning this kind of success of Christ's purchase.

(1) How great this is, chiefly appears in that the success of Christ's purchase summarily consists in the salvation of the elect. But this bestowment of glory is eminently called their salvation: 'To them that look for him, shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation.' Heb. ix. 28. It is also called redemption: being 'sealed unto the day of redemption—a redemption of the purchased possession.' Ephes. i. 14. iv. 30.

(2) All those glorious things which were brought to pass for the church while under the means of grace, are but preparatory to, and images and shadows of this. The means of grace and grace itself are to fit for glory; and all the glorious things which were accomplished for the church in the days of Constantine, and which are to succeed the fall of antichrist, are but a shadow of what will be bestowed at the day of judgment; and therefore they are

spoken of in scripture as images of Christ's last coming to judgment.—But I hasten more particularly to show how this kind of success of Christ's purchase is accomplished.

1. Christ will appear in the glory of his Father, with all his holy angels, coming in the clouds of heaven. When the world is revelling in their wickedness, and compassing the holy city about, just ready to destroy it, then shall the glorious Redeemer appear in the sight of the world; the light of his glory shall break forth, the whole world shall immediately have notice of it, and they shall lift up their eyes and behold this wonderful sight. 'Every eye shall see him.' Christ shall appear in his human nature, in that same body which was brought forth in a stable, laid in a manger, and which was afterwards so cruelly used and nailed to the cross.

Men shall now lift up their eyes, and behold him coming in such majesty and glory as is to us utterly inconceivable. The glory of the sun in a clear firmament will be but darkness in comparison of it; all the glorious angels shall attend on him, a thousand thousand shall minister to him, and ten thousand times ten thousand shall be round about him. How different a person will he then appear from what he did at his first coming, when he was as a root out of dry ground, a poor, despised, afflicted man! How different now is his appearance, in the midst of those glorious angels, principalities and powers, from what it was when in the midst of a ring of soldiers, with his mock robe and his crown of thorns, to be buffeted and spit upon, or hanging on the cross between two thieves, with a multitude of his enemies round about, triumphing over him!*

* Thence issuing I behold (but mortal sight
Sustains not such a rushing sea of light)
I see on an empyreal flying throne,
Awfully raised, heaven's everlasting Son;
Crowned with that majesty which formed the world,
And the grand rebel flaming downward hurled.
Virtue, dominion, praise, omnipotence,
Support the train of their triumphant prince.

This will be a most unexpected sight to the wicked world: it will come as a cry at midnight: they shall be taken in the midst of their wickedness, and it will give them a dreadful alarm. It will at once break up their revels and carousing. It will put an end to the design of the great army, that will then be compassing the camp of the saints: it will make them let drop their weapons out of their hands. The world, which will then be very full of people, most of whom will be wicked men, will then be filled with dolorous shrieking and crying; for 'all

A zone, beyond the thought of angels bright,
 Around him, like the zodiac, winds its light.
 Night shades the solemn arches of his brows,
 And in his cheek the purple morning glows.
 Where'er serene he turns propitious eyes,
 Or we expect, or find a paradise:
 But if resentment reddens their mild beams,
 The Eden kindles, and the world's in flames,
 On one hand knowledge shines in purest light,
 On one the sword of justice fiercely bright.
 Now bend the knee in sport, present the reed,
 Now tell the scourg'd imposter he shall bleed!

Triumphant King of glory, soul of bliss!
 What a stupendous turn of fate is this!
 Oh whither art thou raised above the scorn
 And indigence of him in Bethlem born,
 A needy, helpless, unaccounted guest,
 And but a second to the foddered beast!
 How changed from him, who meekly prostrate laid,
 Vouchsafed to wash the feet himself had made!
 From him who was betrayed, forsook, denied,
 Wept, languished, prayed, bled, thirsted, groaned and died;
 Hung pierced and bare, insulted by the foe,
 All heaven in tears above, earth unconcerned below!

Now the descending triumph stops its flight,
 From earth full twice a planetary height.
 There all the clouds, condensed, two columns raise
 Distinct with orient veins and golden blaze.
 One fixed on earth, and one in sea, and round
 Its ample foot the swelling billows sound.
 These an immeasurable arch support,
 The grand tribunal of this awful court.
 Sheets of bright azure, from the purest sky,
 Stream from the crystal arch, and round the columns fly.
 Death wrapt in chains low at the basis lies,
 And on the point of his own arrow dies.

Here high enthroned th' eternal judge is placed,
 With all the grandeur of his Godhead graced;
 Stars on his robes in beauteous order meet,
 And the sun burns beneath his dreadful feet.

the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.' Rev. i. 7. And where shall they hide themselves; how will the sight of that awful majesty terrify them? Then they shall see whom they have mocked and scoffed at, and whose church they have been endeavouring to overthrow. This sight will change the voice of their laughter and singing into dreadful wailing. Their countenance shall be changed from a show of carnal mirth, pride and contempt, to ghastly terror, trembling, and amazement.

But with respect to the saints, the church of Christ, it shall be a joyful and most glorious sight to them; for it will at once deliver them from all fear of their enemies, who before were compassing them about, just ready to swallow them up. Then shall they lift up their heads, and their redemption shall be drawing nigh. Luke xxi. 28. Thus Christ will appear with infinite majesty, and at the same time with infinite love in his countenance. Their countenances also shall be changed, not as the countenances of the wicked, but from sorrow to exceeding joy and triumph. And now the work of redemption will be finished in another sense; the whole church shall be completely and eternally freed from all persecution and molestation from wicked men and devils.

2. The last trumpet shall sound; the dead shall be raised, and the living changed. God sent forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, to gather together his elect from the four corners of the earth in a mystical sense, before the destruction of Jerusalem; that is, he sent forth the apostles and others, to preach the gospel all over the world. And so in a mystical sense, the great trumpet was blown at the beginning of the glorious times of the church. But now the great trumpet is blown in a more literal sense, with a mighty sound which shakes the earth. There will be a great signal given by a mighty sound made, which is called the voice of the archangel, 1 Thess. iv. 16. 'For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the

voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.' On the sound of this trumpet, the dead shall everywhere be raised. The number of the dead is very great, for what multitudes has death cut down since the beginning of the world. But then the number will be much greater after the world shall have stood so much longer, and through most of the remaining time will doubtless be much fuller of inhabitants than ever it has been. All these shall now rise from the dead. The graves shall be opened in all parts of the world, and the sea shall give up the innumerable dead that are in it. Rev. xx. 13.

And now all the inhabitants that ever shall have been upon the face of the earth, from the beginning to the end of the world, shall appear upon the earth at once. The church of God in all ages, Adam and Eve the first parents of mankind, and Abel, Seth, Methuselah, and all the saints who were their contemporaries; Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the prophets, and all the Old Testament saints; the holy apostles of Jesus Christ, and all the saints of their times; the martyrs under the ten heathen persecutions; all who belonged to the church during the dark days of antichrist, all the holy martyrs who have suffered under the cruelty of the popish persecutions; all the saints of the present time, and all that shall be from hence to the end of the world.— Now also the enemies of the church in all ages of the world shall appear upon the face of the earth again; the wicked drowned by the flood, and the multitudes of impenitent sinners that died all over the world among God's professing people, or others before Christ, and all wicked Heathens, Jews, Mahometans, and Papists, that have died since; all shall come together. Sinners of all sorts; demure hypocrites, those who have the fairest and best outside, and open profane drunkards, whoremongers, profane deists, cruel persecutors, and all that have died or shall die in sin, to the end of the world.

At the same time that the dead are raised, the living shall be changed. The bodies of the wicked

who shall then be living, shall be so changed as to fit them for eternal existence without corruption; and the bodies of all the living saints shall be changed to be like Christ's glorious body. 1 Cor. xv. 51—53. They shall be so changed as to render them incapable of pain, affliction or uneasiness; and all that dulness, heaviness, and deformity, which their bodies had before, shall be put off; and they shall put on strength, beauty, and activity, and incorruptible unfading glory. Now the work of redemption shall be so complete, that all the elect shall be actually redeemed both in soul and body. Before this, the work of redemption, as to its actual success, was incomplete; for only the souls of the redeemed were actually saved and glorified, excepting in a very few instances: but now all the bodies of the saints shall be saved and glorified together, both in soul and body.

3. The saints shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and all wicked men and devils shall be arraigned before the judgment seat. When the dead saints are raised, then the whole church, consisting of all the elect through all ages, shall appear together on the face of the earth, excepting those few whose bodies were glorified before; and shall ascend to meet Christ, who shall fix his throne in the air, whence he may be seen by all that vast multitude that shall be gathered before him. Thus the apostle tells us, that when the dead in Christ are raised, and the living changed, then those who are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be ever with the Lord. 1 Thes. iv. 16, 17. Then shall the work of redemption be finished in another respect; the whole church shall be perfectly and for ever delivered from this evil world. They shall take their everlasting leave of this earth, where they have been strangers, and which has been to them a scene of trouble and sorrow; where the devil for the most part has reigned as god, and has greatly molested them; where Christ their Lord has

been crucified; and where they have been so hated, reproached, and persecuted, from age to age; and there shall be an everlasting separation made between them and the wicked. Before they were mixed together, and it was impossible in many instances to determine which were which; but now both saints and sinners shall appear in their true characters.

What an immense cloud of them will there be when all the church shall be gathered together from the east and west, north and south, to the right hand of Christ.—Then the work of redemption will be finished in this respect also. They all belonged to one society before, but yet were widely separated from each other; some being in heaven, and some on earth; and those on earth were separated one from another, many of them by wide oceans and vast continents. But now they shall all be gathered together, never to be separated any more. And not only gathered together, but gathered unto their Head, into his immediate glorious presence, never to be separated from him any more.

At the same time, all wicked men and devils shall be brought before the judgment-seat of Christ. These shall be gathered to his left hand, and, as it seems, will still remain upon the earth, and not be caught up into the air, as the saints shall. Satan, that old serpent, who first procured the fall and misery of mankind, and has all along shown himself such an inveterate enemy to the Redeemer, shall never more have any thing to do with the church of God, or be suffered in the least to afflict any member of it any more for ever; but shall now be judged, and receive the due reward of his deeds. Now is come the time which he long has dreaded, and trembled at the thought of; the time wherein he must be judged, and receive his full punishment. He who by his temptation maliciously procured Christ's crucifixion, and triumphed upon it, as though he had obtained the victory, even he shall

see the consequences of the death of Christ which he procured : for Christ's coming to judge him in his human nature is the consequence of it, because he obtained and purchased this glory to himself by that death. Now he must stand before that same Jesus whose death he procured, to be judged, condemned, and eternally destroyed by him. If Satan, the prince of hell, trembles at the thought of it thousands of years beforehand, how much more will he tremble, as proud and as stubborn as he is, when he comes to stand at Christ's bar ! Then shall he also stand at the bar of the saints, whom he has so hated, afflicted, and molested : for the saints shall judge him together with Christ. 1 Cor. vi. 3. ' Know ye not that we shall judge angels ! ' Now shall he be as it were subdued under the church's feet. Rom. xvi. 20. Satan, when he tempted our first parents to fall, deceitfully and falsely told them, that they should be as gods : but little did he think that the consequence should be, that they should indeed be so much like gods, as to be assessors with God to judge him. Much less did he think, that in consequence of this, one of the posterity of those persons whom he tempted, should actually be united to God, should judge the world, and that he himself must stand trembling and astonished before his judgment seat. And all the infernal spirits who have so opposed Christ and his kingdom, shall now at last stand in the utmost amazement and horror before Christ and his church, who shall appear to condemn them.

Now also shall Christ's other enemies be brought to appear before him. Now shall the proud scribes and pharisees, who had such a malignant hatred against him while in his state of humiliation, and who persecuted Christ to death ; those before whose judgment seat Christ was once called, and stood as a malefactor at their bar, and those who mocked him, and buffeted him, and spit in his face ; now shall they see Christ in his glory, as he forewarned them,

when he was before their judgment seat ; but now they shall stand before him with inconceivable horror and amazement. Matt. xxvi. 64, 65.

Now also all the cruel enemies and persecutors of the church in all ages, shall come in sight together ; Pharaoh and the Egyptians, Antiochus Epiphanes, the persecuting scribes and pharisees, the persecuting heathen emperors, Julian the apostate, the cruel persecuting popes and papists, Gog and Magog, all shall appear at once before the judgment seat of Christ. They and the saints who have in every age been persecuted by them, must confront one another before the great Judge. The saints on their glorious thrones shall now be made the judges of those unjust kings and rulers, who have before judged and condemned them to death. Now shall those persecutors behold the glory to which they are arrived, whom before they so despised and cruelly treated, and Christ will make those holy martyrs as it were to come and set their feet on the necks of their persecutors ; they shall be made their footstool. Thus wonderfully will the face of things be altered from what it used to be in the former times of the world ; now will all things be coming to rights.

4. The righteousness of the church shall be manifested, and all the wickedness of their enemies shall be brought to light. Those saints who had been the objects of hatred, reproach, and contempt in the world, and were reviled and condemned by their persecutors without a cause, shall now be fully vindicated. They shall now appear clothed with the glorious robe of Christ's righteousness. And their inherent holiness shall also be made manifest, and all their good works be brought to light. The good things which they did in secret shall now be manifested openly. Those holy ones of God, who had been treated as though they were the filth and off-scouring of the earth, as though they were not fit to live upon earth, shall now appear to have been the excellent of the earth. God will bring forth their

righteousness as the light, and their judgment as the noon-day. Now shall it be seen who were those that were not fit to live, when all the wickedness of the enemies of Christ and his church, their pride, their malice, their cruelty, their hatred of true religion, shall be set forth in its true light. Now all the wickedness of the whole world shall be fully discovered, their very hearts opened to view ; and things that have been spoken in the ear, in the closet, and done in the dark, shall be manifested in the light, and proclaimed before angels and men. Luke xii. 3.

5. Sentence shall be pronounced both on the righteous and the wicked. Christ, the judge, shall pass that sentence on the church at his right hand : ' Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' Matt. xxv. 34. This shall be pronounced with infinite love, and the voice will make every heart to overflow with joy. Thus Christ shall pronounce a sentence of justification on thousands and millions, who have before had a sentence of condemnation passed upon them by their persecutors. He will thus put honour upon those who have been before despised : he will own them for his, and will as it were put a crown of glory upon their heads before the world ; and then shall they shine forth as the sun with Jesus Christ in glory and joy, in the sight of all their enemies.

Then also shall the sentence of condemnation be passed on the wicked : ' Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.' Thus shall the church's enemies be condemned ; in which sentence of condemnation, the holy martyrs, who have suffered from them, shall concur. When the words of this sentence are pronounced, every syllable will be more terrible than a stream of lightning through their hearts. We can conceive but very little of the horror that it shall produce.

6. Christ and all his saints, and the holy angels ministering unto them, shall then leave this lower

world, and ascend up to the highest heavens. Christ shall ascend in as great glory as he descended, and in some respects greater; for now he shall ascend with his elect church with him, glorified both in body and soul. Christ's first ascension to heaven soon after his own resurrection, was very glorious; but this second ascension, the ascension of his mystical body, his whole church, shall be far more so. The redeemed shall all ascend with him in a most joyful and triumphant manner; and all their enemies and persecutors, who shall be left behind on this accursed ground, shall see their glory and hear their songs.

7. When Christ and his church have ascended to heaven, this world shall be set on fire, and turned into a great furnace, wherein all the enemies of Christ and his church shall be tormented for ever and ever. 2 Pet. iii. 7. 'The heavens and the earth which now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men.' Ay, how will it strike the wicked with horror, when the world shall be set on fire, either by lightning from heaven, or fire issuing out of the bowels of the earth; especially when the fire begins to lay hold upon them, and they find no way of escape. 2 Pet. iii. 10—12. 'The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up.' So fierce will be the heat, that it shall burn the earth to its very centre. 'For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn to the lowest hell; it shall consume the earth with its increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains.' Deut. xxxii. 22.

Here all the persecutors of the church of God, who have before burnt the saints at the stake, shall burn in everlasting fire, and shall suffer torments beyond all that their utmost wit and malice could inflict. Here their bodies shall be tormented eternally, and never be consumed, while the wrath of God shall be poured out upon their souls. Though

the souls of the wicked in hell do now suffer punishment, yet that will be so increased at the day of judgment, that what they suffered before is, in comparison of it, as an imprisonment to the execution which follows. And now the devil, that old serpent, shall receive his full punishment; and that which he long trembled for fear of, shall now fully come upon him. This world, which formerly used to be the place of his kingdom, where he set himself up as God, shall be the place of his full and everlasting punishment.* And in this another design of the work of redemption, that of putting Christ's enemies under his feet, shall be perfectly accomplished. His enemies shall now be made his footstool, in the fullest degree. Now shall be the complete fulfilment of that threatening: 'It shall bruise thy head.' Gen. iii. 15.

8. At the same time, all the church shall enter with Christ, their head, into the highest heavens, and shall there enter on the state of their highest and eternal blessedness and glory. While the lower world, which they have left under their feet, is seized with the fire of God's vengeance, the whole church shall enter, with their glorious head, and all the holy angels attending, in a joyful manner, into the eternal paradise of God, the palace of the great Jehovah, their heavenly Father. The gates shall open wide for them to enter, and there Christ will

* Though this Author has conjectured that this Earth will finally become the place of torment, it seems far more probable that it will form a part of the heavenly world, after it has been purified by fire: but wherever the regions of misery may be fixed in a future state, it is scarcely possible to conceive of a description more awfully sublime, than that given by MILTON in the following passage—

A dungeon horrible on all sides round
 As one great furnace flamed, yet from those flames
 No light, but rather darkness visible
 Served only to discover sights of woe,
 Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
 And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
 That comes to all; but torture without end
 Still urges, and a fiery deluge fed
 With ever burning sulphur unconsumed:
 Such place eternal justice has prepared
 For those rebellious.

bring them into his chambers in the highest sense. He will bring them into his Father's house, into a world unlike that which they have left. Hither Christ will bring them, and present them in glory to his Father, saying, 'Here am I, and the children which thou hast given me.' Heb. ii. 15. Here am I, with every one of those whom thou gavest me from eternity to take the care of, that they might be redeemed and glorified, and to redeem whom I have done and suffered so much, and to make way for the redemption of whom I have for so many ages been accomplishing such great revolutions. Here they are now, perfectly redeemed in body and soul. I have perfectly delivered them from all the ill effects of the fall, and freed them from all their enemies. I have brought them all together into one glorious society, and united them all in myself. I have openly justified them before angels and men, and brought them hither from that accursed world where they have suffered so much, and presented them spotless before thy throne. I have done all that for them which thou hast appointed me. I have perfectly cleansed them from all filthiness in my blood, and here they are resplendent with thy perfect image.—Then the Father will accept and own them for his children, and will welcome them to the eternal and perfect inheritance and glory of his house, giving them more glorious manifestations of his love than ever, and admitting them to a more full and perfect enjoyment of himself.

Now shall be the marriage of the Lamb, in the most perfect sense. The commencement of the glorious times of the church on earth, after the fall of antichrist, is represented as the marriage of the Lamb: but after this we read of another marriage of the Lamb, at the close of the day of judgment. After the beloved disciple had given an account of the day of judgment, in the close of the twentieth chapter of Revelation, he then proceeds to give an account of what follows, in the next two chapters. In particular, he mentions that he saw the holy city,

the new Jerusalem, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And when Christ shall bring his church into his Father's house in heaven; after the final judgment, he shall bring her thither as his bride, having there presented her, whom he loved, and gave himself for, to himself without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. Ephes. v. 27. The bridegroom and the bride shall then enter into heaven, both having on their wedding robes, attended with all the glorious angels, and commencing an eternal feast of blessedness. This shall be the day of the gladness of Christ's heart, in which he will greatly rejoice, and all the saints with him. Christ shall rejoice over his bride, and the bride shall rejoice in her husband, in this state of her consummate and everlasting blessedness.

Now the whole work of redemption is finished, and we have seen how it has been carrying on from the fall of man to this time. Now it is complete, and the top stone of the building is laid. In the progress of the discourse on this subject, we have followed the church of God in all the storms and tempests through which she has passed, till at length, we have seen her enter the harbour, and land in the highest heavens, in complete and eternal glory. We have gone through time, and the several ages of it, as the providence of God and his word have led us; and now we have issued in eternity, when time shall be no more. We have seen all the church's enemies fixed in endless misery, and the church presented before the Father in heaven, there to enjoy the most unspeakable and inconceivable glory and blessedness, throughout the never ending ages of eternity.*

* Eternity, the various sentence past,
 Assigns the severed through distinct abodes,
 Sulphureous or ambrosial: what ensues?
 The deed predominant! the deed of deeds!
 Which makes a hell of hell, a heav'n of heav'n.
 The goddess, with determined aspect, turns
 Her adamantine keys, enormous size,
 Through destiny's inextricable wards,

Now all Christ's enemies will be perfectly put under his feet, and he shall have a most complete triumph over sin and Satan, and all his instruments, and death and hell. Now shall all the promises made to Christ by the Father before the foundation of the world, the promises of the covenant of redemption, be fully accomplished. Christ shall now perfectly have obtained the joy that was set before him, for which he undertook those sufferings which he underwent in the state of humiliation. Now shall all the hopes and expectations of the saints be fulfilled. The state of things that the church was in before was a progressive and preparatory state; but now she is arrived to her most perfect state of glory. All the glory of the best times of the church on earth is but a faint shadow of this her consummate felicity in heaven.

And now Christ the great Redeemer shall be most perfectly glorified, and God the Father shall be glorified in him, and the Holy Ghost shall be most fully glorified in the perfection of his work on the hearts of all the church. Now shall that new heaven and new earth, or that renewed state of things, which had been building up ever since Christ's resurrection, be completely finished, after the material frame of the old heavens and the old earth are destroyed. Rev. xxi. 1. 'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away.'—And who can conceive of the triumph of those praises which shall be sung in heaven on this great occasion. The beloved disciple John seems to want expression to describe the joy on the fall of antichrist, and says, 'It was as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.'

Deep driving every bolt on both their fates.
Then from the chrystal battlements of heav'n,
Down, down, she hurls it through the dark profound,
Ten thousand, thousand fathoms, there to rust,
And ne'er unlock her resolution more.

YOUNG'S Night's Thoughts.

But much more inexpressible will those praises be, which will be sung in heaven after the final consummation of all things : they will be mighty thunderings indeed !

All the former things are now passed away, and what a glorious state are things fixed in to remain to all eternity ! As Christ, when he first entered upon the work of redemption after the fall of man, had the kingdom committed to him of the Father, and took on himself the administration of the affairs of the universe, to manage all so as to subserve the purposes of this affair ; so now, the work being finished, he will deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father. 1 Cor. xv. 24. ‘ Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father : when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power.’ Not that Christ should cease to reign, or have a kingdom after this ; for it is said, ‘ He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.’ Luke i. 33. ‘ His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.’ Dan vii. 14. But the meaning is, that Christ shall deliver up that kingdom or dominion which he has over the world, as the Father’s delegate or vicegerent, to be managed in subserviency to this great design of redemption. The end of this commission, or delegation, which he had from the Father, seems to be to subserve this particular design of redemption ; and therefore, when that design is fully accomplished, the commission will cease, and Christ will deliver it up to the Father, from whom he received it.

GENERAL IMPROVEMENT.

I PROCEED now to enter upon some improvement of the whole that has been advanced.

1. We may hence learn how great is the work of redemption. We have now, in an imperfect manner, considered its whole progress from its foundation

at the fall, through a long succession of wonderful works, advancing higher and higher from one age to another, till the top stone is laid at the end of the world. Let us now consider how great this work is. Do men, when they behold the palaces of princes, admire their magnificence and grandeur? How then should we admire this building of God, which he has been erecting for himself through a long succession of ages. There are three things which have been mentioned, that especially show the greatness of this work of redemption.

(1) The nature of those particular events and dispensations of providence, by which it is accomplished. What great things were done in the world to prepare the way for Christ's coming, and subsequent purchase of redemption. How wonderful was the incarnation of Christ, that God should become man, should reside upon earth for four and thirty years, in a mean and despised condition; that he should spend his life in such labours and sufferings, and at last die upon the cross. And what great things have been done to accomplish the success of Christ's redemption. For this purpose he arose from the dead, and ascended up into heaven, and all things were made subject to him. How many miracles have been wrought, what mighty revolutions have been brought to pass in the world already, and how much greater do we yet expect!

(2) The number of those great events by which God carries on this work, shows the greatness of the work. Those mighty revolutions fill up many ages. The work of creation was completed in six days; but the great dispensations by which the work of redemption is carried on, are so many, that they fill up six or seven thousand years. The flood, the building of Babel, the dispersion of the nations, the shortening of the days of man's life, the calling of Abraham, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah; a long series of wonderful providences relating to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph; the wonders in Egypt, in the Red Sea, in the wilderness; and a

long succession of wonderful providences from age to age towards the nation of the Jews, all contributed in some view to this great end. What great things were done also in Christ's time, and since then, in overturning Satan's kingdom in the heathen empire, in preserving his church in the dark times of popery, and in bringing about the Reformation. How many great and wonderful things must be effected in accomplishing the glorious times of the church ; and at Christ's last coming on the day of judgment, in the destruction of the world, and in carrying the whole church into heaven.

(3) The glorious issue of this whole affair, in the just and eternal destruction of the wicked, and in the consummate glory of the righteous. Let us once more take a view of this building, now it is finished and the top-stone laid. It appeared in a glorious height in the apostles' time ; higher in the time of Constantine, and will appear much more glorious still after the fall of antichrist. But at the consummation of all things, it appears in its greatest magnificence, as a complete lofty structure, whose top reaches to the heaven of heavens ; a building worthy of the great God, the King of kings.

From what has been said, we may infer, that the work of redemption is the greatest of all God's works of which we have any knowledge. This work is the principal of all God's works of providence, and to this they are all reducible. All the revolutions in the world are to subserve this grand design. The work of redemption is also greater than that of creation, as the use of a house is the end of building it. The work of the new creation is more excellent than the old. So it ever is, that when one thing is removed by God to make way for another, the new one excels the old. Thus the temple excelled the tabernacle ; the new covenant, the old ; the new dispensation of the gospel, the dispensation of Moses ; the throne of David, the throne of Saul ; the priesthood of Christ, the priesthood of Aaron ; the new Jerusalem, the old ; and so the new creation far

excels the old. This work of redemption is so much the greatest of God's works, that all the other are to be looked upon either as parts or appendages of it, or as some way reducible to it; and so all the decrees of God do some way or other belong to that eternal covenant of redemption which was between the Father and the Son before the foundation of the world. Every decree of God is some way or other reducible to that covenant. And seeing this is so great a work, we need not wonder that the angels desire to look into it; that it is so much insisted on in the bible, being the great subject of its doctrines, promises, types, songs, histories, and prophecies.

2. Hence we may learn that God is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end of all things. Such are the characters and titles we find often ascribed to God in those places where the scripture speaks of the course of providential events. Isa. xli. 4. 'Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I, the Lord, the first and the last, I am he.' See also Isai. xlv. 6, 7. xlvi. 9, 12. Therefore, when Christ reveals the future events of providence relating to his church and people, and this affair of redemption to the end of the world, to his disciple John, he often reveals himself under this character. Rev. i. 8. 'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.' Ver. 10, 11. 'I heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.' Alpha and Omegan are the names of the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, as A and Z are of ours; and therefore it signifies the same as his being the first and the last, the beginning and the ending. Thus God is called in the beginning of this book, before the course of prophecy begins; and so again at the end of it, after the final issue of events. 'And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end—Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall

be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.' Rev. xxi. 6. xxii. 12, 13.

We have now seen how all things were *from* God in the beginning; on what design God began the course of his providence, and how it has been carried on agreeable to his design, without ever failing; and that at last the conclusion and final issue of things are *to* God. We may therefore exclaim with the apostle, 'Oh the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever, Amen.' Rom. xi. 33, 36. We have seen other states and empires, one after another, fall and come to nothing, even the greatest and strongest of them; how the world has been often overturned, and will be more remarkably so yet than ever it has been. We have seen how the world was first destroyed by water, and that at last it shall be utterly consumed by fire; but yet God remains the same throughout all ages. He was before the beginning of this course of things, and he will be after the end of them. Psal. cii. 25, 26. We have seen all other gods perish; the ancient gods of the heathen in the nations about Canaan, and throughout the Roman empire, are all destroyed, and their worship long since overthrown. We have seen Antichrist, who has called himself a god on earth, and Mahomet, who claims religious honours, and all the gods of the Gentiles, perish: and even Satan, the great dragon, that old serpent, who has set up himself as god of this world, will be cast into the lake of fire, there to suffer his complete punishment. But Jehouah remains, and his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and of his dominion there is no end. We have seen mighty and numberless changes in the world; but God is unchangeable, 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.' Heb. xiii. 8.

We began at the head of the stream of divine providence, and have traced it through its various windings and turnings, till we are come to the end

of it, and see where it issues. As it began in God, so it ends in God. God is the infinite ocean into which it empties itself. Providence is like a mighty wheel, whose circumference is so high that it is dreadful; with the glory of the God of Israel above upon it, as it is represented in Ezekiel's vision. We have seen the revolution of this wheel, and how, as it was from God, so its return has been to God again. All the events of divine providence are like the links of a chain; the first link is from God, and the last is to him.

3. We may see by what has been said, how Christ in all things has the pre-eminence. For this great work of redemption is all his work; and therefore being as it were the sum of God's works of providence, this shows the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, as being above all, and through all, and in all. That God intended the world for his Son's use in the affair of redemption, is one reason given why he created it by him, as seems to be intimated by the apostle in Ephes. iii. 9—12. What has been said shows how all the purposes of God are in Christ; that he is before all, and above all, and that all things consist and are governed by him, and for him. Col. i. 15—13. That God has made him his firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth, and set his throne above their thrones; and upheld his kingdom, when theirs have all come to an end. We see that whatever changes there are, and however Christ's enemies may exalt themselves, yet finally all his enemies shall become his footstool, and he shall reign in uncontrouled power and immense glory; also that in the end his people shall be all perfectly saved and made eternally happy. Thus God gives the world to his Son for his inheritance.

4. Hence we may see the consistency, order, and beauty, of God's works of providence. If we behold these events in any other view than that in which they have been set before us, they will all look like confusion; like a number of jumbled events coming to pass without any order or method, like the tossing

of the waves of the sea. Things will look as though one confused revolution came to pass after another, merely by blind chance, without any regular or certain end.

But if we consider the events of providence in the light in which the scriptures set them before us, they appear an orderly series of events, all wisely directed in excellent harmony and consistence, tending all to one end. The wheels of providence are not turned round by blind chance, but they are full of eyes round about, as Ezekiel represents, and they are guided by the Spirit of God. Where the Spirit goes, they go : and all God's works of providence, through all ages, meet in one at last, as so many lines in one centre. Ezek. i. 18—20.

It is with God's works of providence, as it is with his work of creation ; it is but one work. The events of providence are not so many distinct, independent works, but they are rather so many different parts of one work, one regular scheme. The works of providence are not disunited and jumbled without connection or dependence, but are all united, just as the several parts of one building. There are many stones, many pieces of timber, but are all so joined, and fitly framed together, that they make but one building : they have all but one foundation, and are united at last in one top-stone.

God's providence may not unfitly be compared to a large and long river, having innumerable branches, beginning in different regions, and at a great distance one from another, and all conspiring to one common issue. After their very diverse and contrary courses which they held for a while, they all gather more and more together, the nearer they come to their common end, and all at length discharge themselves at one mouth into the same ocean. The different streams of this river are apt to appear confused to us, because of the limited nature of our sight, so that we cannot see the whole at once, nor discover how they unite in one. Their course appears very crooked, and different streams seem to

run for a while different and contrary ways : and if we view things at a distance, there seem to be innumerable obstacles and impediments in the way of their ever uniting, and coming to the ocean, as rocks, mountains, and the like ; but yet if we trace them, they all unite at last, disgoring themselves into one and the same great ocean.

5. From what has been said we infer, that the scriptures are the word of God, because they alone inform us what is God's design in all these works. It is most reasonable to suppose, that there is some certain scheme to which providence subordinates all the great successive changes in the affairs of mankind ; that all revolutions, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, are conspiring to bring to pass that great event which the Creator and Governor of the world has ultimately in view ; and that the plan will not be finished, nor the ultimate event fully accomplished, till the end of the world.

Now there is nothing else that informs us what this scheme and design of God in his works is, but only the holy scripture. Nothing else pretends to set in view the whole series of God's works of providence from beginning to end, and to inform us how all things were from God at first, and to what end they shall be brought at last. Nothing but the scripture sets forth how God governed the world from the beginning, in an orderly history ; or how he will govern it to the end, by an orderly prophecy of future events ; agreeable to the challenge which the God of Israel makes to the gods, and prophets, and teachers of the heathen. ' Let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen : let them show the former things what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them ; or declare to us things to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods.' Isai. xli. 22, 23.

It seems very fit and requisite, that the rational part of the creation should know something of God's scheme and design in his works, for they doubtless

are the beings principally concerned in them ; especially as God has given them reason, and a capacity of seeing him in his works ; for this end, that they may give him the glory of them. But how can they glorify God in his works, if they know nothing of his designs ? And this seems farther reasonable, because they are made capable of actively falling in with and promoting that design, acting herein as his friends and subjects ; it is therefore reasonable to suppose, that God has given mankind some revelation to inform them of this. But there is nothing else that does it, except the bible. In that we may learn the first original of things, and an orderly account of the scheme of God's works from the beginning, through ages beyond the reach of all other histories. Here we are told what is the grand end that God proposes, and the great things he desires to exhibit. Here we have an account of these worthy of God, and the glory of his perfections. Here we learn the connections of the various parts of the work of providence, in a regular, beautiful, and glorious frame, and have an account of the whole scheme of providence, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, either in history or prophecy, and how they issue in the subduing of God's enemies, and in the salvation and glory of his church, and erecting the everlasting kingdom of his Son. How rational, useful, and excellent a book is the bible, and what characters it bears of being a divine revelation ; a book, without which, we should be left in miserable darkness and confusion.

6. From what has been said, we may see the glorious majesty and power of God in this affair of redemption. His power appears in upholding his church for so long a time, and carrying on this work ; preserving it oftentimes when it was but as a little spark of fire, or as smoking flax, in which the fire was almost extinct. Yet God has never suffered it to be quenched, but will bring forth judgment unto victory. God glorifies his strength in his church's weakness ; in causing his people, who are only like

little infants, finally to triumph over earth and hell ; so that they shall tread on the lion and adder, the young lion and the dragon shall they trample under foot. Psal. xci. 13. The power of God appears also in conquering his many and mighty enemies by that Jesus who was once an infant in a manger, and afterwards a poor, weak, despised man ; yet he conquered, and triumphed over them in their own weapon, the cross.

God's power gloriously appears in conquering Satan when exalted in his strongest and most potent heathen kingdom, the Roman empire. Christ, our Michael, has overcome him, and the devil was cast out, and there was found no more place for him in heaven ; but he was cast out unto the earth, and his angels with him. Again, his power gloriously appears in conquering him in his proud, subtle, and above all cruel, antichristian kingdom ; particularly in Satan's most violent exertions just before its final fall. The mighty kingdoms of Antichrist and Mahomet, which have made such a figure for many ages together, and have trampled the world under foot, when Christ appears, will vanish away like a shadow, or as the darkness in a room does, when the light is brought in. What are God's enemies in his hands ? How is their greatest strength weakness, when he rises up ; and how weak will they all appear together at the day of judgment. Thus we may apply those words in the song of Moses : ' Thy right hand, oh Lord, is become glorious in power : thy right hand, oh Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.' And how great doth the majesty of God appear in overturning the world from time to time, to accomplish his designs, and at last in causing the earth and heavens to flee away, for the advancement of the glory of his kingdom.

7. From what has been said, we may see the glorious wisdom of God. This wisdom appears in creating the world for such great and important ends ; in bringing so great good out of such evil, in

making the fall and ruin of mankind, which in itself is so lamentable, an occasion of effecting such a glorious work as this of redemption, and of bringing his elect to a state of such unspeakable happiness. How doth the wisdom of God appear also in the long series of revolutions which take place in the world, in bringing such order of confusion, in so frustrating the devil, and turning all his subtle machinations to God's glory, and the honour of his Son Jesus Christ ; and in causing the greatest works of Satan to be wholly turned into occasions of glorious triumph of the great Redeemer. How wonderful is the wisdom of God, in bringing all things to such a glorious period at last, and in so directing all the wheels of providence by his skilful hand, that every one of them conspires, as the manifold wheels of a most curious machine, at last to strike out such an excellent issue, such a manifestation of the divine glory, such happiness to his people, and such a glorious and everlasting kingdom to his Son !

8. From what has been said, we may see the stability of God's mercy and faithfulness to his people ; that he never forsakes his inheritance, and remembers his covenant to them throughout all generations. Now we may see the truth of our text : ' The moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool ; but my righteousness shall endure for ever and ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.' Now we may discover the propriety of that name by which God reveals himself to Moses, saying, ' I am that I am.' I am the same that I was when I entered into covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and ever shall be the same. I keep covenant for ever. I am self-sufficient, all-sufficient, and immutable.

Now also we may see the truth of that word : Psal. xxxvi. 5, 6. ' Thy mercy, oh Lord, is in the heavens ; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy righteousness is like the great mountains ; thy judgments are a great deep.' Psal. xxxvi. 5, 6. And if we consider what has been said, we

need not wonder that the psalmist, in the hundred and thirty sixth psalm, so often repeats this, 'For his mercy endureth for ever;' as if he were in an ecstasy at the consideration of the perpetuity of God's mercy to his church, and delighted to repeat it. Let us with like pleasure and joy celebrate the everlasting duration of God's mercy and faithfulness to his church and people, and let us be comforted by it under the present dark circumstances of the church of God, and all the uproar and confusions that are in the world. Let us also take encouragement earnestly to pray for those glorious things, which God has promised to accomplish for his church.

9. Hence we may learn how happy a society the church of Christ is. For all this great work was for their sakes both undertaken and carried on, even because he has loved them with an everlasting love. For their sakes he overturns states and kingdoms, for their sakes he shakes heaven and earth. He gives men for them, and people for their life Isa. xliii. 4. Since they have been precious in God's sight, they have been honourable; and therefore he first gives the blood of his own Son for them, and then, for their sakes, gives the blood of all their enemies. For their sakes he made the world, and for their sakes he will destroy it: for their sakes he built heaven, and for their sakes he makes his angels ministering spirits. Therefore the Apostle says, 'All things are yours: whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present or things to come; all are yours.' 1 Cor. iii. 21. How blessed is this people who are redeemed from among men, and are the first fruits unto God and the Lamb; who have God in all ages for their protection and help! 'Happy art thou, oh Israel: who is like unto thee, oh people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency. Thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places.' Deut. xxxiii. 29.

Let the enemies of the church exalt themselves

as much as they will, these are the people that shall finally prevail. The last kingdom shall be theirs, and shall not be left to other people. Dan ii. 44. We have seen what a blessed issue things shall finally be brought to as to them, and what glory they shall arrive at, and remain in possession of for ever and ever, after all the kingdoms of the world are come to an end, and the earth is removed, and the mountains are carried into the depth of the sea, or where the sea was, and this lower earth shall all be dissolved. Oh happy people, and blessed society ! Well may they spend an eternity in praises and hallelujahs to him who hath loved them from eternity, and will love them to eternity.

10. Lastly, hence all wicked men, all that are in a Christless condition, may see their exceeding misery. You that are such, have no part or lot in this matter. You are never the better for any of those things of which you have heard ; but your guilt is so much the greater, and the misery you are exposed to the more dreadful. You are some of those against whom God, in the progress of the work, exercises so much manifest wrath ; some of those enemies who are liable to be made Christ's footstool, to be ruled with a rod of iron, and to be dashed in pieces. You are some of the seed of the serpent, to bruise the head of which is one great design of all this work. Whatever glorious things God accomplishes for his church, if you continue in the state you are now in, they will not be glorious to you. The most glorious times of the church are always the most dismal times to the wicked and impenitent. And wherever glorious things are foretold concerning the church, there terrible things are predicted of the wicked, its enemies. See Isa. lxvi. 14. And so it ever has been in fact ; in all remarkable deliverances wrought for the church, there has been as remarkable an execution of wrath on its enemies. Thus when God delivered the children of Israel out of Egypt, he poured out his wrath on Pharaoh and the Egyptians. So when he brought

them into Canaan by Joshua, and gave them that good land, he remarkably executed wrath upon the Canaanites. When they were delivered out of their Babylonish captivity, signal vengeance was inflicted on the Babylonians. So when the Gentiles were called, as the elect of God were saved by the preaching of the apostles, Jerusalem and the persecuting Jews were destroyed in a most awful manner. I might observe the same concerning the glory accomplished to the church in the days of Constantine, at the overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom in the downfall of antichrist, and at the day of judgment. In all these instances, and especially in the last, there have been, or will be, exhibited most awful tokens of the divine wrath against the wicked.

You are indeed some of those that God will make use of in this affair; but it will be for the glory of his justice and not of his mercy. The enemies of God shall be reserved for the triumph of Christ's glorious power in overcoming and punishing them, and shall be consumed with this accursed world after the day of judgment, when Christ and his church shall triumphantly and gloriously ascend to heaven. Therefore let all that are in a Christless condition amongst us seriously consider these things, and not be like the foolish people of the old world, who would not take warning, when Noah told them that the Lord was about to bring a flood of waters upon the earth; or like the people of Sodom who would not flee from the wrath to come, and so were consumed in that terrible destruction.

And now I would conclude my discourse in these words from the last of the Revelation: "These sayings are faithful and true, and blessed is he that keepeth these sayings. Behold, Christ cometh quickly, and his reward is with him, to render to every man according as his work shall be. And he that is unjust, shall be unjust still; and he that is filthy, shall be filthy still; and he that is holy, shall be holy still. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the

“ tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into
“ the city : for without are dogs, and sorcerers, and
“ whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and
“ whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. He that testi-
“ fieth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly.
“ Amen ; even so come Lord Jesus.” Rev. xxii.
6, &c.

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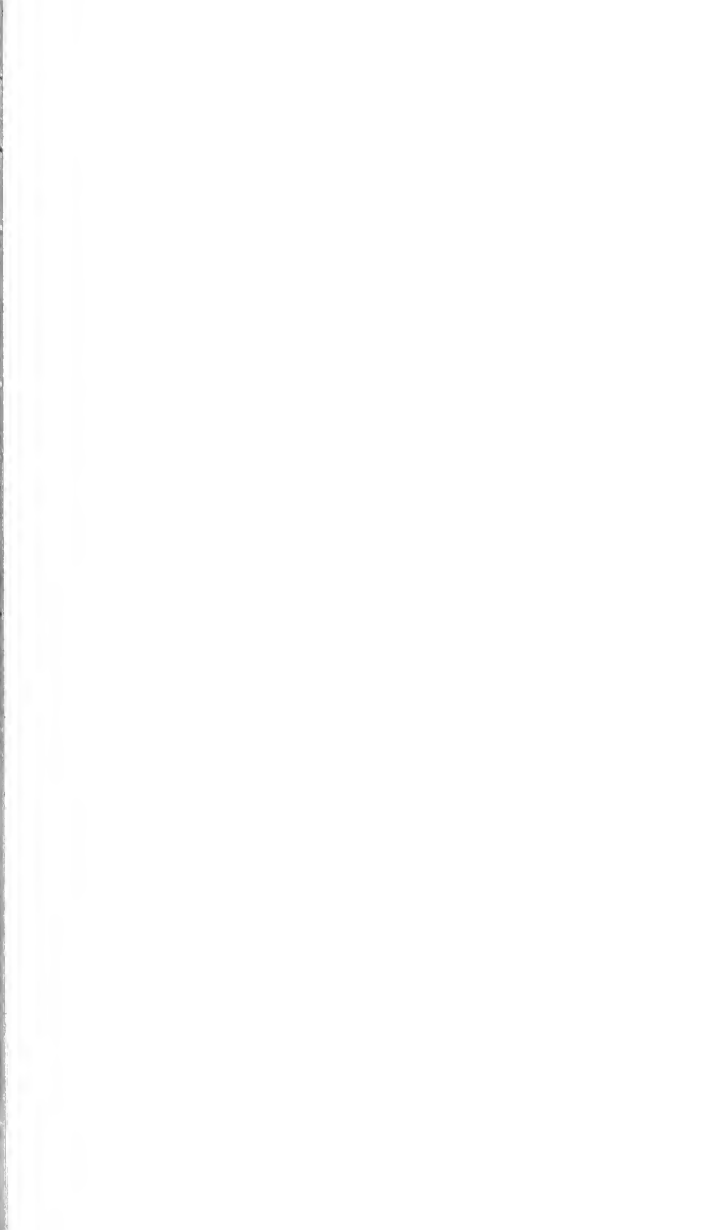
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